

THE
Whole Duty
OF A
CHRISTIAN,

Contained in
Our SAVIOUR's Divine Sermon
on the Mount;

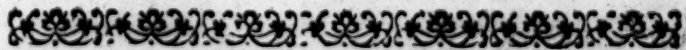
Being an approved EXPOSITION on the
Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Chapters of
St. MATTHEW's Gospel.

To which is added,

The GARDEN of PARADISE:

O R,

A Collection of pious Meditations from
the Works of St. AUGUSTIN.



L O N D O N,

Printed and Sold by J. HART next door
to the Black Horse, and J. LEWIS next
door to the White Bear, in Bartho-
lomew-Close, near West-Smithfield.

Which Duty

CHRISTIAN

ON THE MOUNTAIN

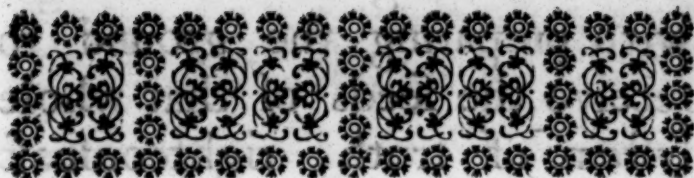
THE GARDEN OF PARADISE

A Collection of the most beautiful and interesting

of the most beautiful and interesting

of the most beautiful and interesting

of the most beautiful and interesting



T H E
P R E F A C E.

 S our Saviour's sermon
A on the mount was what
our blessed Lord began
withal in laying the foundation
of that new dispensation of the
Gospel, which he came to deli-
ver ; so it seems of the greatest
consequence to understand the
true meaning and import of the
same.

And as by this it will appear,
our blessed Lord in his infinite

A 2 wisdom

[iv]

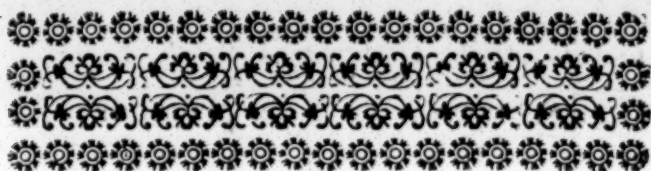
wisdom thought fit to begin with preparing the ground to receive the seeds of that whole system of truth, righteousness and peace, in which consists the kingdom of God, which he came to erect here upon earth, in opposition to the kingdom of darkness: as he thought fit, I say, in this his introductory sermon to his followers, to declare to them the fundamental and distinguishing graces of his disciples, and of the members of his church, such as would surely distinguish them from hypocrites and false pretenders; so it seems to me that the whole system of select morals contained in this discourse, as setting forth the necessary qualifications of a true disciple

disciple of Christ, and discovering therein the main design of the Gospel, should be laid as the foundation in all christian institutions. On which account the following exposition may be of good use to several persons and families, for their instruction in christian morals; and particularly, that it should be taken in by parents and schoolmasters, who intend to educate their children and scholars in the same way that Christ taught his disciples: and by often reading over the text itself, and the practical exposition upon it, they will more especially be prepared sincerely and solemnly to ratify and confirm when come to years of discretion, their baptismal co-

venant, both at confirmation and the Lord's-supper.

To conclude in the words of the reverend Mr. Burkitt: "These
 " three chapters comprehend the
 " sum and substance both of the
 " Old and New Testament. Our
 " Saviour begins his sermon with
 " a declaration who are blessed,
 " including an exhortation to
 " duty, and annexes a reward to
 " the performance of that duty.
 " By this sermon the christian
 " world will be judged in the
 " last day; and by the particulars
 " of it we must all either stand
 " or fall.

[7]



A N
E X P O S I T I O N
O N
Our SAVIOUR's Divine Sermon
on the Mount.

MAT. V, VI, and VII Chapters.



C H A P. V.

AND seeing the multi-
A tudes, he went up into
a mountain, and when
he was sat, his disciples came
A 4 unto

unto him. 2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

Observe here, 1. The preacher; He, that is, Christ, the great prophet and teacher of his church. 2. The place where he preached, Upon a mountain; probably for conveniency to himself, and advantage to his auditors: tho' some will have a mystery in it; that as the law at first was given on a mountain, so Christ would now explain it upon a mountain, or to shew the sublimity of his doctrine and precepts. 3. The posture in which he preached, sitting; When he was sat, he taught, according to the custom of the Jewish doctors, who sat, to shew their authority. 4. The sermon itself, which begins with beatitudes and blessings, and is accompanied with promises of reward: not as the law was deliver'd on mount Sinai with threatenings and thunder, with fire and earthquake, but in a still and soft voice: our Lord's lips are full of grace, they drop as the honeycomb. Blessings and promises are our encouragements to obedience.

3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Observe

Observe here, 1. It is not said, Blessed are the poor in estate; but, Blessed are the poor in spirit; 'tis not a poverty of purse and possession, but a poverty of spirit, that entitles us to the blessing. 2. 'Tis not said, Blessed are the spiritually poor; but, Blessed are the poor in spirit; he that is destitute of the grace and spirit of Christ, that has no sense of his spiritual wants, he is spiritually poor, but he is not poor in spirit. Farther, 3. 'Tis not said, Blessed are the poor-spirited; but, the poor in spirit; such as act below and beneath themselves as men, and as christians, these are poor-spirited men, but these are not poor in spirit. 4. 'Tis not said, Blessed are they that make themselves poor, by leaving their estates and callings, and turning beggars, as some do among the papists: but blessed are they whom the gospel makes poor, by giving them a sight of their spiritual wants and necessities, and directing them to Christ, that they may be made rich. In sum, not those that are poor in estate, or those whom the world has made poor in possession, but those whom the gospel has made poor in spirit, that is, the truly humble lowly spirits have a right and title to the kingdom of heaven. Now humility is called poverty of spirit, because

because it is the effect and fruit of God's spirit.

4 Blessed are they that mourn:
for they shall be comforted.

Observe here, 1. That mourning for sin is a gospel duty; the law allows no place for repentance, tho' we seek it carefully with tears. 2. The time and season for this duty. Blessed are they that now mourn. Sorrow for sin is physick on earth, but 'tis food in hell. Repentance is here a grace, but there a punishment. 3. As mourning goes before comfort, so comfort shall follow after mourning. Our godly sorrow for our own and others sin, shall end in everlasting joy and comfort.

5 Blessed are the meek: for
they shall inherit the earth.

Observe here, 1. The grace and duty recommended, meekness. 2. The wages and reward belonging to that grace and duty, the inheritance of the earth. Meekness either respects God or our neighbour. As it respects God, so it implies flexibility to his commanding will, and submissiveness

siveness to his providential pleasure. As it respects our neighbour, it consists in forgiving injuries, bearing reproaches, and recompensing good for evil. The reward and blessing insured to this grace and duty is, the inheritance of the earth, where heaven is not excluded, but included; yet the earth is mentioned, to shew that men should be no losers by their meekness, as to their outward estates; for Almighty God will make good to them whatever they lose for peace sake. O happy temper of mind, that at once secures heaven and earth to boot? Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth in this life, and heaven in the next.

6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Observe 1. The character of the persons whom Christ pronounces blessed; such as hunger and thirst after righteousness. 2. Wherein their blessedness doth consist; they shall be filled. By righteousness we are to understand, 1. A righteousness of justification; the righteousness of the mediator imputed to us, by which we stand
righteous

righteous in God's sight, being freed from condemnation. 2. A righteousness of sanctification, wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, enabling us to act righteously. By the former, there is a relative change in our condition; by the latter, a real change in our constitution. (1.) Learn, That all, and only such as do spiritually hunger and thirst after Christ and his righteousness, are in an happy and blessed condition. (2.) That to hunger after holiness, is to apprehend the worth of it; to be sensible of the want of it, to be desirous of it, and restless in endeavours after it, as men usually do that are pincht with hunger.

7 Blessed are the merciful:
for they shall obtain mercy.

Here our blessed Redeemer recommends to us a compassionate regard towards the miseries of others, and that both in soul and body, name and estate; to be forward to pity and pardon, to relieve and help, to give and forgive. And as an encouragement he adds, That as we deal with others, God will deal with us; our charity towards men shall be crowned with mercy from God, and that in abundance

dance too ; for our rivulet of charity, we shall partake of an ocean of mercy, Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy. Learn, That the merciful man is a blessed man, and therefore blessed, because he shall obtain mercy when he most wants it, and most desires it. Mercy not wages.

7 Blessed are the pure in heart:
for they shall see God.

Note here, 1. The duty required and called for, Purity of heart and life; the first expressed, the other included; for a clean heart will be accompanied with a clean life: where there is a principle of grace within, there will be the actings of grace without. 2. The incentive to this duty; the pure in heart and holy in life, shall see and enjoy God; the infinitely pure, and perfectly holy God: they shall see him spiritually and mediately in this life, gloriously and immediately in the life to come.

9 Blessed are the peace-makers:
for they shall be called the
children of God.

Observe

Observe 1. The connexion between peace and purity; purity of heart and peaceableness of life accompany one another; there is no inward purity, where there is not an endeavour after outward peace. 2. The duty exhorted to, namely, to love peace, and to labour after peace; to love it ourselves, and promote it amongst others; to be not only peaceable, but peace-makers. 3. The title of honour that is here put upon such as are of this peaceable and peace-making temper; they shall be called the children of God; that is, they shall be reputed and esteem'd God's children, for their likeness to him who is the God of peace. And they shall be dignified and honoured with the privileges of God's children, namely, grace here, and glory hereafter.

10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil

evil against you falsely for my sake. 12 Rejoyce, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Note here, 1. That all the disciples and followers of Christ, live they never so holily and inoffensively in the world, yet they expect suffering and persecution. 2. That the keenest and sharpest edge of persecution is usually turned against the ministers of Christ, and falls heaviest on the prophets of God. 3. That such sufferings and such persecutions as will afford a man solid comfort, and entitle him to real blessedness, must be endured and undergone for righteousness sake. 4. That it is the will and command of Christ, that those which suffer for him and for righteousness sake, should not only be meek and patient, but joyous and chearful: Rejoyce, and be exceeding glad. 5. That such a patient and chearful suffering of persecution for Christ in this life, shall certainly be rewarded with the glory and
blessedness

bleſſedneſs of the life that is to come.
Great is your reward, &c.

13 Ye are the ſalt of the earth:
but if the ſalt have loſt his fa-
vour, wherewith ſhall it be ſalt-
ed? It is thenceforth good for
nothing, but to be caſt out, and
to be troden under foot of men.

Our Saviour compares chriſtians in ge-
neral, and his miniſters in particular, unto
ſalt, for a double reaſon. Firſt, becauſe
it is the nature of ſalt to preſerve things
from corruption and putrefaction, and to
render them ſavoury and pleaſant. Thus
are the miniſters of the goſpel to labour
and endeavour by the purity of their do-
ctrine, to ſweeten putrifying ſinners, that
they may become ſavoury to God and
man; and may be kept from being fly-
blown with errors and falſe doctrine.
Secondly, becauſe ſalt has a piercing pow-
er in it, which ſubdues the whole lump,
and turns it into its own nature: ſuch a
piercing power is there in the miniſtry of
the word, that it ſubdues the whole man
to the obedience of itſelf, as if Chriſt had
ſaid,

said, Ye are to be preachers and patterns to the world: Ye are appointed by your pure doctrine, and good conversation, to purge the world from that corruption in which it lies; but if you lose either soundness of doctrine, or the favour of a good conversation, you will be wholly useless as to these great ends, and must expect to be cast off by me, as unfavoury salt is cast to the dunghil.

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel: but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Observe here, 1. Our Saviour's doctrine.
2. The inference which he draws from it by way of application. The doctrine de-

B

livered

livered is this, that christians in general, and the ministers of the gospel in particular, are the light of the world. But how? not originally, but derivatively; not efficiently, but instrumentally. Christ himself is the light of the world by way of original, his ministers are lights by way of derivation and participation from him. Farther, Christ teaches them the end why he communicated light unto them, namely, to enlighten, direct and quicken others: even as the sun in the firmament, and a candle in the house, diffuses and disperses its light to all that are within the reach of it; so should all christians, and particularly Christ's ministers, by the light of life and doctrine, direct people in their way towards heaven. Observe

2. The inference which our Saviour draws from the foregoing doctrine, Ye are the light of the world, therefore, Let your light shine before men. Where note 1. That our good works must shine, but not blaze; all vain-glory and ostentation must be avoided in the good works we do. 2. Although we must abound in good works, that men may see them, yet not to be seen of men. 3. That the glorifying of God, and doing good to mankind must be the
great

great end we propound in all the good works which we perform.

17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

Our Saviour here informs his followers, that he had no design to abrogate any part of the moral law, or to loose mankind from the least measure of their duty, either towards God or man; but that he came to fulfil it. 1. By yielding a personal obedience to it. 2. By giving a fuller and stricter interpretation of it, than the Pharisees were wont to give; for they taught, that the law did only reach the outward man, and restrain outward actions. As if Christ had said, Tho' I preach a more special doctrine than is contained even in the letter of the moral law, yet think not that I came to destroy or dissolve the obligations of that law, for I came to fulfil the types and predictions of the prophets, and to give you the full sense and spiritual import of the moral law.

18 For verily I say unto you,
Till heaven and earth pass, one
jot or one tittle shall in no wise
pass from the law, till all be
fulfilled.

Another reason is here given by our Saviour, why he had no intention to abrogate or abolish the law; and that is drawn from the duration and perpetuity, the unchangeableness and immutability of the law: sooner shall heaven and earth be abolished, than the authority and obligation of the moral law be dissolved. (1.) Learn, That the law of God is an eternal and unchangeable rule of life and manners, and is to stand in force as long as the world stands, and the frame of the heaven and earth endures. Learn, (2.) That christianity is not contrary to the laws by which mankind had formerly been obliged. Christ commands nothing that the natural or moral law had forbidden, and forbids nothing which they had commanded, but has perfected the law, and set it higher than any of the most studied doctors did think themselves formerly obliged by it. To suppose that
Christ

Christ has added to the moral precepts of the first table, is to suppose that he has added to perfection; for that required the Jew to love God with all his heart, soul and strength: which is the same that Christ requireth of us christians here. Nor has Christ added to the duties of the second table, since that requires us to love our neighbour as ourselves, which St. Paul tells us, Rom. xiii. 9. is the fulfilling of the law.

19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

To evidence yet farther that the moral law is a perfect rule of life, our Saviour tells his disciples, that if any of them did either by their doctrine or practice make void any of the least of God's commands, either by allowing themselves in the om-

mission of any known duty, or in the commission of any known sin, they should never enter into the kingdom of God. Learn, That such a professor of christianity as allows himself in the least voluntary transgression, either of omission or commission, and encourages others by his example to do the like, is certainly in a state of damnation.

20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Observe here, 1. A glorious prize or reward set before the christian as attainable; namely, the kingdom of heaven. 2. The means required in order to our obtaining of this prize, and laying hold of this reward; we must be holy and righteous persons: heaven is the reward of righteousness, a reward conferred only upon righteous persons. 3. Here is the special qualification of that righteousness expressed, which will entitle us to heaven
and

and falvation: It must be a righteousness which exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, and that these three ways. 1. In its principle and motive; love to God, and obedience to his command; not the applause and commendation of men. 2. In its aim and end. The pharisees made themselves, their own credit and esteem, their worldly gain and interest, their ultimate end, and not God's glory, their supreme aim. 3. In the manner of performance; the pharisees duty wanted that purity and spirituality which the law of God required; they had respect only to the outward action, without any regard to the inward intention, and to that purity of heart which God required. Question, In what things are we to exceed the scribes and pharisees? Answer, In sincerity, or by being that within which we seem to be without. In simplicity, or having holy ends in our religious actions. In humility, or having low and humble thoughts of ourselves and our best performances. In charity, or having compassion on all distressed persons. In universality of obedience to all commands. Learn, That holiness of heart, and righteousness of life, which God's law

requires of us, is absolutely and indispensably necessary to salvation.

21 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill: and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment. 22 But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the counsel: but whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire.

Here our blessed Saviour begins to expound the spiritual sense and meaning of the law, and to vindicate it from the corrupt glosses of the pharisees: where observe, Christ doth not deliver a new law, but expounds the old; doth not enjoin new duties, but enforces the old ones: The law of God was always perfect, requiring

quiring the sons of men to love God with all their hearts, and their neighbour as themselves. In this exposition of the law, Christ begins with the sixth commandment, 'Thou shalt not kill: where he shews, that besides the actual taking away of life, a person may violate that command, 1. By rash anger. 2. By disgraceful and reviling words. Thence learn, that every evil motion of our hearts against our neighbour consented to, all unjust anger towards him, all terms of contempt put upon him, are forbidden by the law of God, no less than the gross act of murder itself. Learn (2.) That wrath and anger without just cause, hath its degrees; and according to the degrees of the sin, will the degrees of punishment be proportionable in the next world. Learn (3.) That self-murder is here forbidden, and in no case lawful, man having no more power over his own life, than over anothers; tho' life be never so miserable and painful, yet must we wait God's time for our dismission and release.

23 Therefore, if thou bring
thy gift to the altar, and there
remembrest

remembrest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him: lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. 26 Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

For preventing the sin of rash anger, which in our Saviour's account is a degree of murder, he exhorts all his disciples and followers to brotherly agreement, and to seek mutual reconciliation with each other.

ther. Agree with thine adversary: that is, thy offended, or offending brother: agree with him, as becomes a man; quickly, as becomes a christian: implying, that it is a necessary duty for every christian to seek reconciliation sincerely and speedily, with such as have offended him, or have been offended by him. Observe 2. The argument or motive with which Christ enforces his exhortation to brotherly reconciliation, drawn from the peril and danger of the neglect; and this is twofold; the first respects our present duties and services, when we wait upon God at his altar, and attend upon him in holy offices. None of our performances will find acceptance with God, if there be found malice and hatred, anger and ill-will against our brother. Learn, That no sacrifice we can offer will be acceptable to God, so long as we ourselves are implacable to men. A second danger respects us, when we appear before God in judgment; then God will be our adversary, Christ our judge, satan our accuser, hell our tormentor; if now from the heart we do not every one of us forgive our brother his trespasses. Lord! how heinous then is this sin of inveterate anger, hatred and malice in our hearts against any person,

no

no gift tho' never so costly, no devotions tho' never so specious, will prevail with God to pass it by whilst we live; and if we die with hearts full of this rancour and bitterness, we can never expect to be incircled in the arms of him who is all love, all mercy, all goodness and compassion; no reconciliation with God without any hearty good-will to all men. Nay farther, the text here speaks of a prison, which is the dismal dungeon of hell, into which the implacable and unreconciled person must be cast, and lie for ever without mixture of pity; and it is not mens scoffing at it, that will secure them against the horror of it.

27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. 28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

Our Saviour next proceeds to explain
the

the seventh commandment, which forbids adultery; by which the pharisees understood only the gross act of uncleanness, and carnal lying with a woman. But, says our Saviour, whoever secretly in his heart desires such a thing, and casts his eye upon a woman in order to such an act, entertaining only a thought of it with pleasure and delight, he is an adulterer in God's account. Learn, That such is the purity and spirituality of the law of God, that it condemns speculative wantonness, no less than practical uncleanness; and forbids not only the outward action, but the secret purpose and intention, and first out-goings of the soul after unlawful objects.

29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. 30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and
cast

cast it from thee : for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

Our Saviour had condemned ocular adultery in the foregoing verse, or the adultery of the eye ; He that looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her in his heart. Whence note, that the eye is an inlet to sin, especially the sin of uncleanness : lust enters the heart at the window of the eye. Now in these verses Christ prescribes a remedy for the cure of this eye-malady ; If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out : which is not to be understood literally, as if Christ commanded any man to maim his bodily members ; but spiritually, to mortify the lusts of the flesh, and the lusts of the eye, which otherwise will prove a dangerous snare to the soul. Learn 1. That sin may be avoided ; it is our duty to avoid whatsoever leads to it, or may be an occasion of it ; if we find the view of an ensnaring object will inflame us, we must, though not put out
our

our eye, yet make a covenant with our eye, that we will not look upon it. Note 2. That the best course we can take to be kept from the outward acts of sin, is to mortify our inward affection and love to sin. This is to kill it in the root; and if once our inward affections be mortified, our bodily members may be spared and preserved; for they will no longer be weapons of sin, but instruments of righteousness unto holiness.

31 It hath been said, whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement. 32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery.

Our blessed Saviour still proceeds in vindicating and clearing the seventh commandment

mandment from the corrupt glosses of the pharisees. Almighty God had tolerated the Jews in case of uncleanness to put away their wives by a bill of divorce, Deut. xxiv. 1. hereupon the pharisees maintained it lawful to put away the wife upon every slight occasion. This abuse Christ corrects, and shews, that divorce, except in case of adultery, is a certain breach of the seventh commandment. Learn 1. That so indissoluble is the marriage-covenant betwixt two persons, that nothing but adultery, which violates the bands of marriage, can dissolve or disannul it. 2. When persons are justly put away, it is unlawful for them to marry any other, or for others knowingly to marry to them.

33 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths. 34 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it
is

is God's throne: 35 Nor by the earth, for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king. 36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

The next commandment which our Saviour expounds and vindicates, is the Third, which requires a reverend use of God's name. Now the pharisees taught, that perjury was the only breach of this commandment; and that swearing was nothing, if they did not forswear themselves: and that persons were only obliged to swear by the name of God in publick courts of justice, but in their ordinary and common discourse they might swear by any of the creatures. Now in opposition to these wicked principles and practices, Christ says, Swear not at all; that is, 1. Swear not profanely in your ordinary discourse. 2. Swear not unduly by any of the creatures; for that is to ascribe a deity to them. 3. Swear not lightly, upon any trifling or frivolous occasion;

caſion; for oaths upon ſmall occaſions are great ſins: ſo that an oath is not here forbidden by our Saviour, but reſtrained. For though light and needleſs, common and ordinary ſwearing, be a very great ſin; yet to take an oath upon a ſolemn occaſion, when lawfully called thereunto, is a chriſtian and neceſſary duty. Chriſt by his prohibition doth not forbid all aſſertory or promiſſory oaths in matters teſtimonial, when impoſed by the magiſtrate, for Chriſt himſelf, when adjured by the high-prieſt, did anſwer upon oath. But he forbids all voluntary oaths in common converſation, and in our ordinary diſcourſe, becauſe an oath is an act of religious worſhip; therefore to trifle with it is a horrid provocation.

37 But let your communication be, yea, yea; nay, nay: for whatſoever is more than theſe, cometh of evil.

Here our Lord preſcribes a proper means and remedy for ſhun-
ning the oc-
caſion and danger of raſh ſwearing; and
that is by uſing and accuſtoming ourſelves
in

in conversation, to a true simplicity and constant plainness of speech; either affirming or denying, according to the nature of the thing; letting oaths alone, till we are called to them upon great occasions, for ending strife between man and man. Learn, That the great end of speech being to communicate the sense of our minds each to other, we ought to use such plainness and simplicity in speaking, that we may believe one another without oaths, or more solemn and religious asseverations.

38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. 39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. 41 And who-

C 2 soever

soever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

Our Saviour here vindicates the Sixth commandment, which obliges us to do no wrong to the body of our neighbour. God had given a law to the publick magistrate, to require an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, when a person was wronged: hereupon the pharisees taught, that a private person wronged by another, might expect satisfaction from him to the same degree in which he had been wronged by him; if he had lost an eye by another, he might revenge it, by taking away the eye of another. But, says Christ, I say unto you, Resist not evil; that is, seek not private revenge, but leave the avenging of injuries to God and the magistrate: and in trivial matters not to appeal at all, and when forced, not for revenge sake. Teaching us, that christians ought rather to suffer a double wrong, than to seek a private revenge; christianity obliges us to bear many injuries patiently, rather than to revenge one privately. Religion indeed doth not bid us invite injuries, but it teaches us to bid them welcome: we are not to return
evil

evil for evil, but are rather to endure a greater evil than revenge a less.

42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn thou not away.

Our Saviour here presses the law of charity upon his disciples: this is twofold; a charity in giving to them that beg, and a charity in lending to them that desire to borrow: christianity obliges all those which have ability, to abound in the works of charity of all sorts and kinds whatsoever. He that is truly charitable doth not only give, but lend; yea, sometimes lends, looking for nothing again: it is not enough to act charity of one sort, but we must be ready to act it in every kind, and to the highest degree that our circumstances and abilities will admit. Giving is a godlike thing, he is the giver of every good and perfect gift, he gives before we ask; and we must imitate God in giving, namely, by giving what we give chearfully, sincerely, discreetly, proportionally, universally, in

obedience to God's command, and with an eye at his glory. And there is sometimes as great charity in lending, as there is in giving; many a poor family by our lending them a small matter, may raise themselves into a condition to live comfortably and honestly in the world.

43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: 44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.

Another corrupt gloss which the pharisees had put upon the law of God, our Saviour here takes notice of: the law said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, Levit. xix. 18. this they interpreted, to relate only to their own countrey men
the

the Jews; concluding, that they might hate all the uncircumcised nations as enemies: but, saith our Saviour, I require you to love all men; for if enemies must not be shut out of your love, none must. Love your enemies; here the inward affection is required. Bless them that curse you; there outward civility and affability is required. Do good to them that hate you; here real acts of kindness and charity are commanded to be done by us to our bitterest and most malicious enemies. Pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; these are the highest expressions of enmity that can be, calumny and cruelty; yet are we commanded to pray for those that touch us in these two tenderest points, our reputation and our life. Learn, That christianity obliges us to bear a sincere affection towards our most malicious enemies, to be ready upon all occasions to do good unto them, and to pray for them.

45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the

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good,

good, and sendeth rain on the
just and on the unjust.

To encourage us to the foregoing duty of loving our enemies, our Saviour propounds the example of God himself to our imitation, That you may be the children of your Father; that is, that you may be known to be the children of your Father which is in heaven, by your likeness to him, and imitation of him. Note, That the best evidence we can have of our divine sonship, is our conformity to the divine nature, especially in those excellent properties of goodness and forgiveness. Note 2. That God doth good to them that are continually doing evil unto him. Rain and sun, fat and sweet, gold and silver, are such good things as their hearts and houses are filled with, who are altogether empty of grace and goodness.

46 For if ye love them which
love you, what reward have ye?
do not even the publicans the
same? 47 And if ye salute
your

your brethren only, what do you more than others? do not even the publicans so?

Yet farther to encourage us to this duty of loving our enemies, Christ assures his disciples, that he expects more from them than from others; more than common humanity and civil courtesy towards friends; for even heathens by the light of nature were taught to love those that love them; but he expected that christianity should teach them better, and lead them farther, even, to love their enemies, and to bless them that curse them. Note, love for love is justice: love for no love is favour and kindness; but love for hatred and enmity is divine goodness; a Christ-like temper, which will render us illustrious on earth, and glorious in heaven. But, Lord, how do men continue their love to little sects and parties? and from thence comes that bitterness of spirit of one party towards another: and, oh! how hard is it to find a christian of a true catholick love and temper.

48 Be ye therefore perfect,
even as your Father which is in
heaven is perfect.

That is, aim at perfection in all christian virtues and divine graces, but particularly in this of love; in imitation of your heavenly Father, who is the perfect pattern of all desirable goodness and adorable perfections. To be perfect, as our heavenly Father is perfect, is indeed impossible as to equality, but not as to imitation. The word rendred here Perfect, by St. Matthew, is elsewhere by St. Luke rendred Merciful, Luke vi. 36. implying, that charity is the perfection of a christian's graces: he that is made perfect in love, is perfect in all divine graces in the account of God. Learn 1. That there is no standing still in religion, but he that will be saved must press on towards perfection. Learn 2. That no less than perfect and compleat perfection in grace, and particularly in the grace of love and charity, is, and ought to be the aim of every christian in this life, and shall be his attainment in the next.



C H A P. VI.

TAKE heed that you do not
 your alms before men, to
 be seen of them: otherwise ye
 have no reward of your Father
 which is in heaven. 2 There-
 fore when thou doest thine
 alms, do not sound a trumpet
 before thee, as the hypocrites
 do, in the synagogues, and in
 the streets, that they may have
 glory of men. Verily, I say un-
 to you, they have their reward.
 3 But when thou doest alms,
 let not thy left hand know what
 thy right hand doth: 4 That
 thine alms may be in secret:
 and

and thy Father which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly.

Observe here, 1. The duty directed to, almsgiving after a right manner; Do not your alms before men; some copies read it, Do not your righteousness before men: because almsgiving is a considerable part of that righteousness and justice which we owe unto our neighbour; he that is uncharitable, is unjust: acts of charity are acts of justice and equity. It also intimates to us, that the matter of our alms should be goods righteously gotten; to give alms of what is gotten unjustly, is robbery, and not righteousness. Observe 2. Our Saviour's cautionary direction in giving of alms, Take heed that you do them not to be seen of men. It is one thing to do our alms that men may see them, and another thing to do them that we may be seen of men. We ought to do alms before men, that God may be glorified; but not to be seen of men, that ourselves may be applauded. Observe 3. The particular sin which our Saviour warns his disciples
against

against in giving their alms, namely, ostentation and vain-glory, which the pharisees were notoriously guilty of; sounding a trumpet, to call people about them when they gave their alms. Thence learn, That the doing any good work, especially any work of charity and mercy vain-gloriously, and not with an eye at God's glory, will certainly miss of the reward of well-doing in another world. Observe 4. The advice given by our Saviour, for the prevention of this sin and danger; and that is, to do our alms as secretly as we can; Let not thy right hand know what thy left hand doth: that is, conceal it from thy nearest relations, and if possible from thyself. Note thence, that the secrecy of our charity is one good evidence of its sincerity. Hence the Egyptians made the emblem of charity to be a blind boy, reaching out honey to a bee that had lost her wings.

5 And when thou prayest,
thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray
standing

standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward. 6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

Here our Saviour warns his disciples against the same pharisaical hypocrisy in praying, which he had before reprov'd in almsgiving. It was lawful to pray in the synagogues, and to pray standing, and that before men; but to do this upon design to be applauded by men, is condemned by Christ. Our business in prayer lies with God, we are not to concern ourselves how men like our performances; it is sufficient if God doth approve and will accept them. To cure the foregoing vanity, Christ directs to secret prayer

er in our closets, where God is the witness, and will be the rewarder of our sincerity. Note, That secret prayer is a commanded and encouraged duty, and when in sincerity performed, shall be attended with a publick and glorious reward: Pray to thy Father which is in secret, &c.

7 But when ye pray use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. 8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

A vain-glorious ostentation in prayer was condemned by our Saviour in the former verse; here a vain-glorious multiplication of words, by idle tautologies, and impertinent repetitions, is condemned also: after the manner of the heathen, who expect to have their prayers granted
by

by God for the multiplicity of words used by themselves. Hence note, that a christian's business in prayer being not to inform God, (for he knoweth what things we need before we ask him;) nor yet to move and persuade God, (for he is our Father;) it certainly argues an undue apprehension of God, when we lengthen out our prayers with vain repetitions and a multitude of words. Yet note 1. That it is not all repetition of the same words in prayer, which Christ here condemns, for he himself prayed thrice, using the same words, that the cup might pass from him. Nor, 2. Are we to apprehend that prayers continued to a considerable length are forbidden by Christ; for Solomon's prayer was such, 1 Kings viii. Nehemiah's such, chap. ix. 'Tis said the people confessed and worshipped for three hours: Christ continued in prayer all night; and the church, Acts xii. made prayers without ceasing for St. Peter's enlargement. And we read of St. Paul's praying night and day, 1 Thess. iii. 10. and of his commanding the churches to be instant in prayer, and to continue in prayer. But Christ here condemns prayers lengthened out upon an apprehension that we shall be heard for our much speaking,

ing, or can move God by arguments whilst we continue in our sins.

9 After this manner therefore pray ye.---

As if Christ had said, for preventing these and all other faults in prayer, I will myself give you a compleat form of prayer, and an exact pattern and platform for your imitation when you pray. Note, That the Lord's prayer is both a perfect form of prayer which ought to be used by us, and also a pattern and platform, according to which all our prayers ought to be framed. St. Matthew says, After this manner pray ye; St. Luke says, When ye pray, say.

--- Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
 10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive
 D our

our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

The sense and signification of this best of prayers, is this: " O thou our Father
 " in Jesus Christ, who remainest in thy
 " throne in heaven, and art there per-
 " petually praised, and perfectly obeyed
 " by glorious angels and glorified
 " saints; grant that thy name may be
 " glorified, thy throne acknowledged,
 " and thy holy will obeyed here on
 " earth below, by us thy sons and ser-
 " vants, most sincerely and readily, and
 " in some proportion to what is done in
 " heaven. And because by the reason of
 " the frailty of our natures, we cannot
 " subsist without the comforts and sup-
 " ports of life, we crave, that such a
 " proportion of the good things of this
 " life may be given unto us, as may be
 " sufficient for us; and that we may be
 " content with our allowance. And
 " knowing that thy holiness and justice
 " obliges thee to punish sin and sinners,
 " we

“ we plead with thee, for the sake of
 “ thy Son’s satisfaction, to pardon our
 “ daily trespasses which we are guilty of
 “ in this state of imperfection, as we do
 “ freely and heartily forgive others that
 “ have offended and wronged us. And
 “ seeing that by the reason of the frailty of
 “ our natures, we are prone to rush upon,
 “ and run into temptation; we crave,
 “ that by the power of thy omnipotent
 “ grace, we may be kept from Satan’s
 “ temptations, from the world’s allure-
 “ ments, from our own evil inclinations,
 “ and be preserved unblameable to thine
 “ everlasting kingdom; which is exalted
 “ over all persons, over all places, over
 “ all things, in all times past, present,
 “ and to come: And accordingly, in te-
 “ stimony of our desires, and in assurance
 “ to be heard and answered, we say,
 “ Amen, so be it, so let it be, even so,
 “ O Lord, let it be for ever.” More
 particularly, in this comprehensive and
 compendious prayer, the following se-
 verals are remarkable: namely, 1. The
 learned observe, that this prayer is taken
 out of the Jewish liturgies, in which it is
 entirely found, excepting those words,
 As we forgive them that trespass against
 us. From whence Grotius notes, how

far Christ the Lord of his church was from affecting novelties, or despising any thing because it was a form; a piece of piteous weakness amongst some at this day. Observe 2. The person to whom Christ directs us to make our prayers; namely, to God, under the notion of a Father, teaching us, That in all our religious addreses to God, we are to conceive of him, and pray unto him under the notion and relation of a Father; Our Father, &c. So is he by creation, by a right of providence and preservation, by redemption, by outward and visible profession, by regeneration and adoption; and this relation which God stands in to us, may encourage us to pray unto him; for being our Father, we are sure that he is of easy access unto, and graciously ready to grant what we pray for; and whereas it is added, which art in heaven, this is not so to be understood as if his essence were included, or his presence circumscribed and confined there, for he fills heaven and earth with the immensity of it; but he is said to be in heaven, because there is the special manifestation of his presence, of his purity, of his power and glory, and teaches us with what holy fear, with what humble

humble reverence, and not without a trembling veneration, polluted dust ought to make their solemn approaches to the God of heaven. Observe 3. That the three first petitions relate more immediately to God. (1.) That his name may be hallowed; by the name of God understand God himself, as made known to us in his attributes, words and works. This name is hallowed or sanctified by us three ways; by our lips, when we acknowledge his divine perfections, and tell of all his wondrous works; in our hearts, by entertaining suitable conceptions of God; and in our lives, when the consideration of these divine perfections engage us to suitable obedience. (2.) That his kingdom may come, by which we are not to understand his general and providential kingdom, by which he ruleth over all the world, that being always come, and capable of no farther amplification; but principally the kingdom of grace promoted in the hearts of his people by the preaching of the gospel, we pray that God would dethrone sin and satan in our own and others souls, and increase grace and sanctification both in us and them, and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened, and we may

be preserved blameless to the coming of Christ in his kingdom. (3.) That his will may be done, by which the preceptive rather than the providential will of God, is to be understood, we are to obey the former universally, and to submit to the latter very chearfully; it intimates, that it ought to be the prayer and care, the study and endeavour of every christian, that the commanding will of God may be so done by men upon earth, as it is by the glorified saints and glorious angels done in heaven; namely, with that alacrity and chearfulness, with that speed and readiness, with that constancy and diligence, that the imperfection of humane nature will admit of; imitating the blessed angels, who execute the divine commands without reluctance or regret. Observe 4. The three last petitions respect ourselves, as the three former did Almighty God. The first of which is a prayer for temporal blessings, Give us this day our daily bread, where note the mercy pray'd for, Bread, which comprehends all the comforts and conveniencies of life, and whatever is necessary for the supporting humane nature. Also the qualification, it must be our own bread, not anothers, what we have a civil right

right to as men, and a covenant right to as christians. Note farther, the kind of bread we ask and desire, it is daily bread, hereby we are put in mind of our continual dependence upon God for our lives, and for all the supports of life which we enjoy, and also kept in mind of our mortality; and mark the way and manner of conveying all good things to us, it is in a way of free-gift. Give us our daily bread, we cannot give it ourselves, and when we have it of God, we receive it not as a debt, but as a free-gift. The next petition is for spiritual blessings, Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Where note (1.) Some things supposed; namely, That we are all sinners, and as such stand in need of pardon and forgiveness. (2.) That our sins are debts, wilful debts, repeated debts, innumerable debts, inexcusable debts, debts difficultly discharged, and yet if undischarged, undoing debts. (3.) That we are obliged to pray every day for daily pardon, as we do for daily bread, for our sins are many and daily. (4.) It is here supposed, that since we are to pray for forgiveness of sin, it is impossible ever to satisfy the justice of God for sin. Lastly note, The condition or qualification

tion required, forgive as we forgive : This requires, (1.) That our minds be full of charity, free from rancour and ill will, and all desires of revenge, and a secret grudge against another. (2.) That we stand ready to help them, and do any office of love and service for them that have offended us. (3.) That we admit our offending brother into friendship and familiarity, which is called a forgiving him from the heart, our heart must be towards him as formerly it was. The sixth and last petition follows, Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Here note, a double mercy prayed for ; namely, preventing mercy, and delivering mercy. 1. Preventing mercy, Lead us not into temptation ; hereby it is supposed, (1.) That we are unable to keep ourselves from temptation, partly through our natural depravity, partly through carnal security. (2.) That it is God that must keep us from Satan's assaults, his traps and snares, which every where he lays in ambush for us. (3.) That it is our own daily duty to be earnest and instant with God in prayer, not to suffer us by the subtraction of his grace, or in a way of punishment for sin, to run into the circumstances which may prove snares to us,

us, but daily to afford us such a measure of his grace, as may keep us from falling by temptation, and not to leave us fallen under the temptation, but to recover us speedily by his power, and enable us to stand more firmly for the future. 2. We here pray for delivering mercy, Deliver us from evil, by which may be understood Satan the evil one, but especially the evil of sin; we pray here that God would graciously preserve us from those vicious inclinations of our minds, and evil dispositions of our hearts, which render us so prone to yield to the temptations of Satan; here we see the ugly and deformed face of sin, it is evil; evil in its author and original, it is of the devil, the evil one; evil in its effects and fruits; it doth debase and degrade us, pollute and defile us, befool and deceive us, and, without repentance, damns and destroys us. Observe lastly, The conclusion of the Lord's-prayer, which contains a complication of argument to urge Almighty God with, for obtaining the mercy pray'd for. 1. For thine is the kingdom; thou art the only absolute and rightful sovereign, and all men are concerned to honour thee and obey thy laws; thou art the supreme governour of the world,
and

and king of thy church, therefore let thy kingdom come, and thy will be done.

2. Thine is the power, therefore give us daily bread, and forgive our daily sins, for thou hast power to supply the one, and authority to pardon the other: the power of God is a mighty encouragement to prayer, and faith in the power of God has a mighty prevalency in prayer with God. 3. Thine is the glory, that is, thine will be the glory; as if we should say, Lord, by enabling us to hallow thy name, by owning thy kingdom, by doing thy will, and by thy providing for us, and pardoning of us, thou wilt have much glory by us and from us; it teaches us, that as our prayers in general ought to be argumentative; so an argument in prayer drawn from the glory of God, is a mighty encouragement to hope for audience and acceptance. 4. For ever and ever, that is, thy kingdom is eternal, thy power eternal, thy glory eternal; the God whom we pray to is an eternal God, and this attribute of God is improveable in prayer, as an encouragement to expect the same blessings from God which others have had before us, for he is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever, Amen. A word used in all languages,

guages, denoting an hearty assent to our own prayers, and an hearty desire to receive the mercies prayed for, and an humble assurance that we shall be heard and answered.

14 For, if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive you.

15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your father forgive your trespasses.

There being no duty to which our corrupt natures are more backward than this of forgiving injuries, our Saviour repeats that duty over and over, and frequently inculcates it in the holy gospels: assuring us, that forgiving others is the indispensable condition upon which we are to expect forgiveness from God. Learn thence, that every time we go to God in prayer, and beg forgiveness of him as we forgive others, if we do not forgive them heartily and sincerely, fully and freely, readily and willingly, we fly in the face of God, and our prayers
are

are a sort of imprecations against our selves. Note farther, that although God promises us forgiveness if we forgive others; yet it is with this limitation, if no other condition of salvation be wanting, for this virtue alone cannot obtain favour with God, unless other duties are performed.

16 Moreover, when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward. 17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face: 18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

The

The next duty which our Saviour instructs his disciples in, is that of religious fasting, which is a devoting of the whole man, soul and body, to a solemn and extraordinary attendance upon God, in a particular time set apart for that purpose, in order to the deprecating of his displeasure, and for the supplicating of his favour; accompanied with an abstinence from bodily food and sensual delights, and from all secular affairs and worldly business. Now our Saviour's direction as to this duty of fasting is double: 1. He cautions us to beware of an abuse in fasting: be not as the hypocrites are, of a sad countenance; that is, do not affect a fullen sadness, ghastliness and unpleasantness of countenance, like the hypocritical pharisees, who vitiate and discolour their faces, do marr and abolish their native complexion. Hypocrisy can paint the face black and sable, as well as pride with red and white. 2. He counsels us to take the right way in fasting; to anoint the head, and wash the face: That is, to look as at other times, using our ordinary garb and attire, and not to affect any thing that may make us look like mourners, when really we are not so. Where we may note, that though hypo-

hypocrites by their dejected countenances and mortified habits, do seek to gain an extraordinary reputation for piety and devotion, yet the sincere christian is to be abundantly satisfied with God's approbation of his services, and with the silent applause of his own conscience.

19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Observe here, 1. Something imply'd; namely; That every man has his treasure; and whatsoever, or wheresoever that treasure is, it is attractive, and draws the heart of man unto it: For every man's treasure
is

is his chief good. 2. Something permitted; namely, The getting, possessing, and enjoying of earthly treasure, as an instrument enabling us to do much good. 3. Something prohibited; and that is, The treasuring up of worldly wealth, as our chief treasure: Lay not up treasures on earth; that is, take heed of an inordinate affection to, of an excessive pursuit after, of a vain confidence and trust in any earthly comfort, as your chief treasures. 4. Here is something commanded; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven; treasure up those habits of grace, which will bring you to an inheritance in glory: be fruitful in good works, laying up in store for yourselves a good foundation against the time to come, that ye may lay hold of eternal life. 5. The reasons assigned, (1.) why we should not lay up our treasure on earth; because all earthly treasures are of a perishing and uncertain nature, they are subject to moth and rust, to robbery and theft; the perishing nature of earthly things ought to be improved by us, as an argument to fit loose in our affections towards them. (2.) The reason assigned why we should lay up our treasure in heaven, is this: because heavenly treasures are subject to
no

no such accidents and casualties as earthly treasures are, but are durable and lasting. The things that are not seen are eternal: the treasures of heaven are inviolable, incorruptible and everlasting. Now we may know whether we have chosen these things for our treasure, by our high estimation of the worth of them, by our sensible apprehension of the want of them, by the torrent and tendency of our affection towards them, and by our laborious diligence and endeavour in the pursuit after them. Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also.

22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. 23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?

In the foregoing verses our Saviour acquainted us what in our affections and judgments we should esteem as our chief treasure: now this judgment concerning our chief treasure, is by our Saviour here compared to the eye; as the eye is the candle of the body, that enlightens and directs it, so our understanding and judgment of the excellency of heaven, and the things above, will draw our affections towards them, and quicken our endeavour after them. Note thence, That such as our judgment is concerning happiness, such will our desires and endeavours be, for the attainment of that happiness. Our affections are guided by our apprehensions; where the esteem is high, endeavours will be strong.

24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.

Observe here, a two-fold master spoken
 E of,

of, God and the world. God is our master, by creation, preservation, and redemption; he has appointed us our work, and secured us our wages. The world is our master, by intrusion, usurpation, and a general estimation; too many esteeming it as their chief good, and delighting in it as their chief joy. Observe 2. That no man can serve these two masters, who are of contrary interests, and issue out contrary commands: when two masters are subordinate, and their commands subservient each to other, the difficulty of serving both is not great; but where commands interfere, and interests clash, it is impossible. No man can serve God and the world, but he may serve God with the world: no man can seek God and Mammon both, as his chief good, and ultimate end; because no man can divide his heart betwixt God and the world. Learn, that to love the world as our chief good, and to serve the world as our chief and sovereign commander, cannot stand with the love and service which we bear and owe to God. The world's slaves, whilst such, can be none of God's freemen.

25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on: is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

The next sin which our Saviour cautions his disciples against, is immoderate care for the things of this life; such a solicitous and vexatious care for food and raiment, as is accompanied with diffidence and distrust of God's fatherly providence over us, and provision for us; and the arguments which our Saviour uses to dissuade from this sin, are many and cogent, laid down in the following

verses. Learn here (1.) That Almighty God will provide for every servant of his food and raiment, and a competency of the comforts and conveniencies of life. Learn (2.) The want of faith in God's promise, and a distrust of his fatherly care, is a God-provoking and a wrath-procuring sin. Learn (3.) That notwithstanding God's promise to supply our wants, we not only may, but must use such prudential and provident means as are in our power, in order to the supply of our own wants; and this is so far from distrusting of God, or not depending and believing on him, that it is indeed a special act of this faith, the doing of what he requires us to do, and without our doing of which he hath not promised to supply us. His promises, which are the object of our faith, are not absolute, but conditional promises, they require and suppose a condition to be performed on our part, and then give us a right to the thing promised, and not before. Every man therefore must do somewhat himself to provide for his own, (and not to do so is infidelity in St. Paul's style; just as the disciples are called faithless, for not casting out of the devil, that would not be cast out but by prayer and fasting, that is, for not using
that

that means to cast him out) must endeavour to be instrumental to God's providence, and not fly to his extraordinary protection, when his ordinary is afforded us. God doth not use to multiply miracles unprofitably, nor at all, but for the begetting or confirming of our faith: which cannot be the case when we neglect those means of making good God's truths which are already by him afforded us: but only when all lawful means have been tried improsperously; then it will be God's season to shew forth his extraordinary power. In the mean time it is sufficient that he offer us means to bring us to that end which he promiseth; and if we neglect those means, and so fail in our performance of the condition required of us, we thereby discharge him of all obligation to make good the promise to us; which was not absolute for him to do without us, but conditional, for him to do if we failed not in our parts. The true means required on our parts, as subservient to God's providence in feeding and cloathing us, may be known in general by this mark, That all means perfectly lawful, (that is, all things that are proper to that end, and are no way prohibited by God) are such, and all unlawful

lawful are not. But then particularly, first, labour and diligence in ones calling is such a lawful means: As in spiritual, so in temporal things, if we labour, or work, God will co-operate. As in the war with Amalek, when Israel fights, God will fight with them: Poverty is the Amalek, our honest labour is our fighting against it, (and therefore the idle person is called in scripture, a disorderly walker) and when we are thus employ'd, God our captain, hath sworn that he will have war, will fight against that enemy, with us for ever; and that with a secret hand assisting him that is thus busied, prospering him insensibly that is thus employ'd: A sure blessing on the laborious, The hand of the diligent maketh rich, saith Solomon; and on the other side, He that will not labour, saith the apostle, let him not eat; which is there a piece of apostolical discipline, to besiege idleness and starve it up; and that an image on earth of what is done in heaven, it being the rule of God's ordinary providence, that they that neglect the means shall not obtain the end. This promise being conditional (as all others) not to the idle, profane fiduciary, but to the faithful labourer; the absolute stoical depender on fate may

starve

starve for want of industry, die for want of physick, and be damned for want of repentance; and all this not through too much, but too little faith, the not taking the means along with him, which were predestined by God to bring him to a better end.

27 Which of you by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature? 28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lillies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. 29 And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Wherefore if God so cloath the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more cloath you, O ye of little
E 4 faith?

faith? 31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be cloathed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

Four arguments are here used by our Saviour, to dissuade us from the sin of anxious care; 'tis needless, 'tis fruitless, 'tis heathenish, 'tis brutish. 1. 'Tis needless; Your heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of these things, and will certainly provide for you; and what need you take care, and God too? 2. 'Tis fruitless; Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature? That is, by all your solicitous care we can add nothing, either to the length or comfort of our lives. 3. 'Tis heathenish; After all these things do the Gentiles seek. 4. 'Tis brutish; nay, worse than brutish; the fowls of the air, and the
beasts

beasts of the field are fed by God, much more shall his children : has God a breakfast for every little bird that comes chirping out of its nest? and for every beast in the wilderness that comes leaping out of its den? and will he not much more provide for you, O ye of little faith? surely he that feeds the ravens when they cry, will not starve his children when they pray. Naturalists observe of the raven, that she exposes her young ones as soon as they are hatch'd, leaves them meatless, and fatherless, to shift and struggle with hunger as soon as they come into the world; and whether by the dew from heaven, or flies, or worms, God feedeth them when they gape and cry, they are provided for: From whence our Saviour infers, that man being much better, that is, a more considerable creature than the fowls, the providence of God will provide for him, though no solicitude and anxious thoughtfulness of his contributes thereunto.

33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness,

ness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

That is, Let your first and chief care be to promote the kingdom of grace in this world, and to secure the kingdom of glory in the next, and in order unto both, seek after an universal holiness and righteousness, both of heart and life; and then fear not the want of these outward comforts, they shall be added in measure, tho' not in excess; to satisfy, tho' not to satiate; for health, tho' not for surfeit. Observe 1. That christians must here on earth set themselves to seek heaven, or the kingdom of God. 2. That God's kingdom cannot be sought, without God's righteousness: holiness is the only way to happiness. 3. That heaven, or the kingdom of God, must be sought in the first place, with our chief care and principal endeavour. 4. That heaven being once secured by us, all earthly things shall be superadded by God, as he sees needful and convenient for us.

34 Take therefore no thought
for

the morrow: for the morrow
shall take thought for the things
of itself: sufficient unto the day
is the evil thereof.

Here our Saviour reinforces his dehortation from solicitous care for worldly things; assuring us, that every day will bring with it a sufficient burthen of trouble, and therefore we ought not to torment ourselves, by antedating our own sorrows, and foretelling what may, or may not come to pass. Learn, That it is a painful, sinful and unprofitable evil, to perplex ourselves with distrustful and distracting fears of what may come upon us: every day has its own duty and difficulty; and though sufferings must be expected, and prayed for, yet we must not torment ourselves to day, with the fears of what may be to morrow; but every day cast our burthen of care upon that God, who daily careth for us.



C H A P. VII.

JUDGE not, that ye be not judged. 2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

Observe here, The prohibition, and the reason of that prohibition. The prohibition, Judge not: This is not meant of ourselves, but of our neighbour. Self-judging is a great duty; judging others a grievous sin; yet is not all judging of others condemn'd, but a judging of our neighbour's state or person rashly and rigidly, censoriously or uncharitably; especially unrighteously and unjustly. And the reason of the prohibition is added, If we judge others rashly, God will judge us righteously. Learn thence, That a rash and censorious judging of others, renders

renders a person liable and obnoxious to the righteous judgment of God. Note farther, That Christ doth not here forbid judicial judging by the civil magistrate, nor ecclesiastical judging by the church-governours, whole office gives them authority so to do; nor does he forbid one christian to pass a judgment on the notorious actions of another, seeing the duty of reproof cannot be performed without it: but it is such a rash and censorious judging our brother, as is void of charity towards him, as is accompanied with contempt of him; especially if we have been guilty of the same or greater sins before him.

3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?
 4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

eye? 5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

By the mote in our brother's eye, is to be understood small and little sins, or some supposed sins: By the beam in our own eye, is meant some notorious sin of our own. Learn 1. That those who are most censorious of the lesser infirmities of others, are usually most notoriously guilty of far greater failings themselves. 2. That those who desire others should look upon their infirmities with a compassionate eye, must not look upon the failings of others with a censorious eye. 3. That there is no such way to teach us charity in judging others, as to exercise severity in judging of ourselves.

6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they

they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent you.

By that which is holy, understand the word and ordinances in general; but admonition and reproof in particular: By dogs and swine, incorrigible and unreclaimable sinners, hardened scorers of holy things: 'tis a proverbial speech, expressing how sure charitable reprehensions are to be cast away upon incorrigible sinners. Learn 1. That 'tis possible for sinners to arrive at such a height and pitch in wickedness and sin, that it may be a christian's duty not to admonish or reprove them. Observe 2. How Christ provides, as for the honour of his word, so for the safety of those that publish it. As Christ will not have his word offered to some sinners, lest they should abuse it; so lest they should abuse those that bring it. When sinners turn Rinish swines, and we are in danger of being rent by them, Christ himself gives us a permission to cease reproving of them.

7 Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you. 8 For every one that asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. 9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? 10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good gifts to them that ask him?

Observe here, a precept and a promise; the precept, or duty commanded, is importunity and constancy in prayer,
we

we must ask, seek, and knock: The promise, or mercy insured, is, audience and acceptance with God. Note 1. That man is a poor, indigent, and necessitous creature; full of wants, but unable to supply them. 2. That God is an all-sufficient good, able to supply the wants, and to relieve the necessities of his creatures, if they call upon him, and cry unto him. 3. Yet if we do not presently receive what we ask, we must still continue to seek and knock; though prayer be not always answered in our time, yet it shall never fail of an answer in God's time. 4. That natural propensity which we find in our breasts, to hear the desires, and to supply the wants of our own children, ought to raise in us a confident expectation, that Almighty God will hear our prayers, and supply our wants, when we call upon him: if a father will give when a child asks, much more will God. If ye being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? God loves to be giving, and to give good gifts is his delight: but prayer is the key that opens both his heart and hand: yet not every person, nor every prayer shall find

F

accept-

acceptance with God, the person praying must be a doer of God's will, St. John ix. 31. and not regard iniquity in his heart, nor entertain any grudge against his neighbours; the matter we pray for must be what is agreeable to God's will, and the manner of our prayer must be in faith and with fervency, an unfainting perseverance.

12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

Observe here 1. An incomparable rule of life. Always to do as we would be done by. Note, That the great rule of righteousness and equity in all our dealings with men, is this; to do as we would be done unto; it is a short rule, a full rule, and a clear rule; both the light of nature, and the law of Christ bind it upon us. Observe 2. The commendation of this rule, it is the law and the prophets; that is, the sum of the Old Testament, so far as concerns our duty to our neighbour,

neighbour, and the substance of the second table. Learn, That it is the design of the scriptures of the Old Testament, first to render men dutiful and obedient to God, and then righteous and charitable one to another. This is the law and the prophets, yea, the whole of the law and the prophets, to love God above our selves, and to love our neighbour as our selves.

13 Enter in at the straight gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Observe here 1. That every man is a traveller in a certain way. 2. That there are but two ways in which the race of mankind can travel; the one strait and narrow, that leads to life and salvation;

the other broad and wide, which leads to hell and destruction. 3. That because of the difficulties in the way to salvation, and the easiness of the way to hell and destruction; hence it is that so few walk in the one, and so many in the other. 4. That christians having the strait way to heaven revealed to them in and by the word of God, should chuse rather to go in that way alone to life, than to run with the multitude in that broad way, which leads down to the chambers of death and hell. 5. That the metaphor of a gate, denotes our first entrance into a religious course of life, and its being strait, denotes the difficulty that attends religion first: evil habits to be put off, old companions in sin to be parted with, but when faith and patience have once smoothed our way, love will make our work delightful to us.

15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheeps cloathing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits:
Do

Do men gather grapes of thorns,
 or figs of thistles? 17 Even
 so every good tree bringeth
 forth good fruit: but a corrupt
 tree bringeth forth evil fruit.
 18 A good tree cannot bring
 forth evil fruit: neither can a
 corrupt tree bring forth good
 fruit. 19 Every tree that
 bringeth not forth good fruit,
 is hewn down and cast into the
 fire. 20 Wherefore by their
 fruits ye shall know them.

Observe here 1. A caution given, Be-
 ware of false prophets. There were two
 sorts of deceivers, which our Saviour gave
 his disciples a special warning of; name-
 ly, false Christs, and false prophets: false
 Christs were such as pretended to be the
 true Messiahs; false prophets were such as
 pretended to own christianity, but drew
 people away from the simplicity of the
 gospel. Observe 2. The ground of this
 caution, They come in sheeps cloathing,

but inwardly are ravening wolves: that is, they make fair pretences to strictness in religion, and to greater measures and degrees of mortification and self-denial than others. Whence we learn, that such as go about to seduce others, usually pretend to extraordinary measures of sanctity themselves, to raise an admiration amongst those who judge of saints more by their looks than by their lives; more by their expressions than by their actions. What heavenly looks and devout gestures, what long prayers and frequent fastings, had the hypocritical pharisees, beyond what Christ or his disciples ever practised? Observe 3. The rule laid down by Christ, whereby we are to judge of false teachers; By their fruits we shall know them. Learn, That the best course we can take to judge of teachers pretending to be sent of God, is to examine the design and tendency of their doctrines, and the course and tenour of their conversations. Good teachers, like good trees, will bring forth the good fruits of truth and holiness; but evil men and seducers, like corrupt trees, will bring forth error and wickedness in their life and doctrine.

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity.

Not every one, that is, Not any one that saith, Lord, Lord, that is, that owneth me by way of profession, by way of prayer, and by way of appeal, shall be saved; but he that doeth the will of my Father, sincerely and universally. Learn hence 1. That multitudes at the great day shall be really disowned by Christ, as

none of his servants, that did nominally own him for their Lord and master: many that have now prophesied in his name, shall then perish in his wrath: many that have cast out devils now, shall be cast out to devils then: such as have now done many wonderful works, shall then perish for evil workers. Note 2. That a bare name and profession of christianity, without the practice of it, is a very insufficient ground to build our hopes of heaven and salvation upon. A profession of faith, and purposes of obedience, without actual obedience to the commands of God, will avail no person to salvation. 3. That gifts, eminent gifts, yea, extraordinary and miraculous gifts, are not to be rested in, or depended upon as sufficient evidences for heaven and salvation. Gifts are as the gold which adorns the temple, but grace is like the temple that sanctifies the gold.

24 Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; 25 And the
the

the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house: and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock. 26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house: and it fell, and great was the fall of it.

Christ here speaks of two houses, the one built upon a rock, the other on the sand; these two houses were alike skillfully and strongly built, to outward appearance; while the sun shone, and the weather was fair, none could discern but that the house upon the sand was built as well, and might stand as long as that on the rock; but when the rain fell, the founda-

foundation failed. Thus, where is the hypocrite with all his faith and fear, with all his shew and appearance of grace, in a wet and windy day? his goodly outside is like the apples of Sodom, fair and alluring to the eye, but being touch'd instantly evaporate into dust and smoak. An hypocrite stands in grace no longer than till he falls into trouble; and accordingly our Saviour here concludes his excellent sermon, with an elegant similitude: the wise builder, is not the frequent hearer, but the faithful doer of the word, or the obedient christian; the house is heaven, and the hope of eternal life; the rock is Christ; the building upon the sand, is resting in the bare performance of outward duties; the rains, the winds, and the floods, are all kind of afflicting evils, sufferings, and persecutions that may befall us. Note 1. That the obedient believer is the only wise man, that builds his hopes of heaven upon a sure and abiding foundation. Note 2. That such professors as rest in the outward performance of holy duties, are foolish builders, their foundation is weak and sandy, and all their hopes of salvation vain and uncertain. An outward profession of christianity, though set off by prophesying

fyng and doing miracles, will not avail any man towards his account at the great day, without that real and faithful, that universal and impartial obedience to the laws of Christ which the gospel requires.

28 And it came to pass when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: 29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Here we have two things observable:
 1. The manner of our Lord's teaching, it was with authority; that is, it was grave and serious, pious and ardent, plain and profitable. With what brevity, without darkness! with what gravity, without affectation! with what eloquence, without meretricious ornament, were our Lord's discourses! the majesty he shewed in his sermons, made it evidently appear, that he was a teacher sent of God, and clothed with his authority. Observe 2. The success of his teaching; the people were astonished at his doctrine: affected
 with

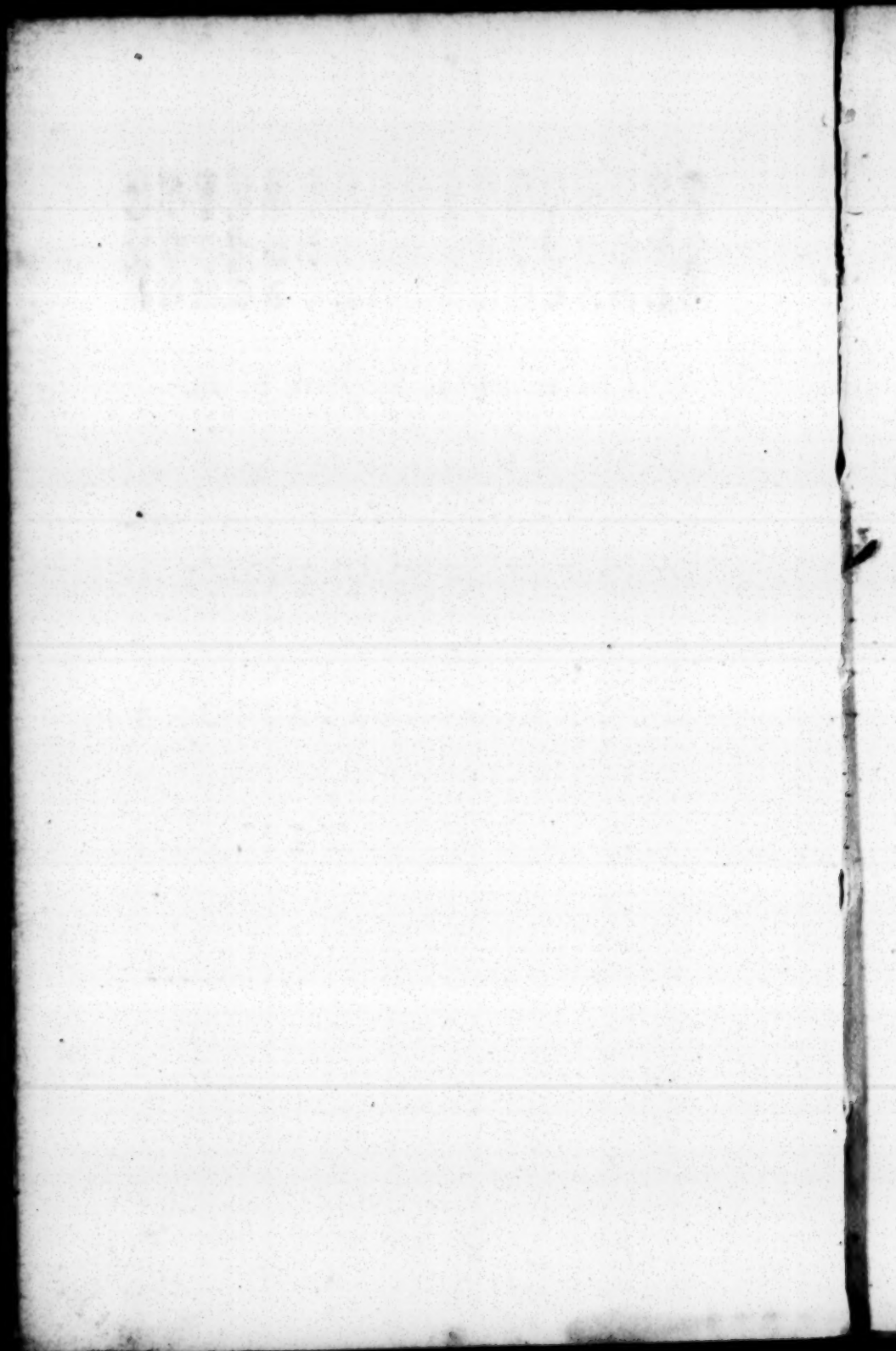
with admiration, believing him to be an extraordinary prophet. Learn, That such is the power of Christ's doctrine, when accompanied with the energy of his Holy Spirit, that it makes all his auditors admirers, yea, believers; it causes astonishment in their minds, and reformation in their manners.

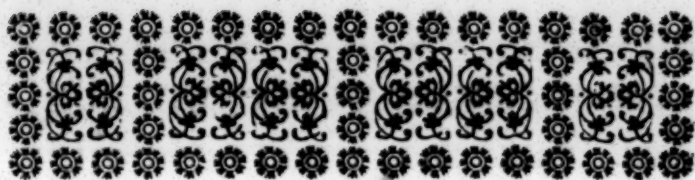
Soli Deo Gloria.



The Garden of Paradise:
OR, A
COLLECTION
OF
DIVINE MEDITATIONS
FROM
St. AUGUSTIN.







THE PREFACE.

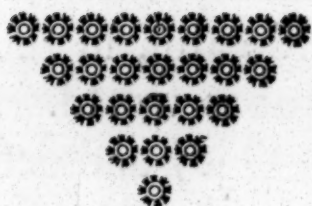
THE multitude and vast
 variety of enslaving ob-
 jects, with which in
 this life we are every
 where beset, divert our thoughts
 and cool our love of heaven.
 It is therefore necessary to for-
 tify and rouse ourselves, that
 we may wake out of our delu-
 ding dream; and when we feel
 our souls rove and fall off, we
 may be able to bring them back
 speedily, to God our true and
 chief Good. This considera-
 tion,

tion, and my fervent love of my God, not any rash presumptuous conceit of my own abilities, put me upon compiling this little book ; that so I might have some pious reflections always about me ; collected from the choicest sayings of holy fathers ; the fervent reading whereof may warm me afresh with divine love, whenever I shall feel that holy fire begin to languish in my heart. Assist me therefore, O my God, in this well-intended undertaking ; for thee, even thee, I seek, and love, and praise, and adore, with heart and mouth, and every faculty I have.

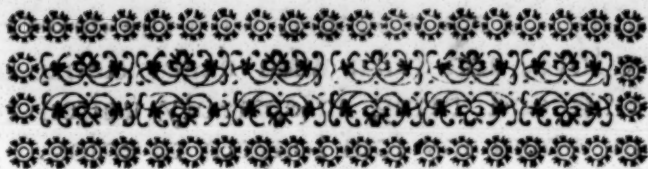
My

My mind intirely dedicates
 itself to thee, gasps and pants
 after thee, and covets no other
 blifs than the sight of her be-
 loved; tastes no other pleasure,
 but that which results from speak-
 ing, hearing, writing, conferring,
 and perpetually dwelling upon
 the meditation of thee and thy
 glory: expecting from these sweet
 remembrances, some refreshment
 and inward calm, in the midst of
 a tempestuous world. To thee
 therefore, O joy and desire of my
 heart, I cry aloud, and from the
 bottom of my heart. I call within,
 because I know thee there; for
 wert not thou in me, I should not
 be at all; and were not I in thee,
 thou would'st not be in me. But
 thou art in me, whenever in my
 G memory;

memory; from thence I know thee, and there I find thee, when I call to mind, and delight myself in recounting thy glorious perfections, from, and by, and in whom all things subsist.



MEDL



MEDITATION I.

The pleasure of meditating up-
on GOD.


HOW sweet, O gracious Lord,
 who in wonderful kindness hast
 so loved, and saved, enlivened,
 and sanctified, and exalted us,
 how inexpressibly sweet are the
 thoughts and the remembrance of thee!
 The more I dwell on these reflections, the
 more I feel my soul exhilarated and trans-
 ported with them. The excellencies of
 thy nature, and merciful dispensations of
 thy providence, I contemplate with the
 most abstracted simplicity of thought, that
 my present state is capable of; and feel
 the delights resulting from them swell to
 a pitch, as high as this distance of a so-
 journeyer in a strange land admits. More
 I covet earnestly, and daily aspire after,

and can but covet and aspire after, during my confinement to a body of flesh and frailty. I am wounded with the darts of thy love, and burn with eager desire of seeing and being inseparably united to him whom my soul longeth to enjoy. I will therefore stand upon my guard, and take good heed to my ways; I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding, and exert my utmost activity in setting forth the praises of him, who hath made me his own by a double title; first by creating, and then by renewing and restoring my nature. My soul shall mount above the highest heavens, and in desire dwell with thee continually; that however my bodily presence detain me here below, yet in my inclinations and affections I may reside above, and so my heart be, where thou, its best and most desirable treasure, art.

But pity, I beseech thee, gracious Lord, the impotence and infirmities of thy servant, who, the more he contemplates thine infinite majesty and goodness, the more conscious he is of his disability to raise up to the dignity of that subject. My heart is too narrow, and thy unbounded excellencies, thy beauty, and power, and glory, and love, exceed the
largest

largest comprehensions of any humane mind. As the brightness of thy majesty is unconceivable, so are the bowels of that everlasting mercy, by which thou adoptest them for thine own children, and receivedst them to be one with thyself, whom thou at first createdst out of nothing.

Consider, O my soul, the greatness of this love, and the noble privileges accruing to thee from it: for if thou hast just notions of these things, thou wilt be perfectly convinced, that if the enduring daily pains and sickness, nay, if the torments of hell itself for a season, were made the condition of beholding Christ in his glory, and being received into the number and society of the blessed above; no sufferings could be so exquisite, that they ought not to be gladly entertained, none which would not find themselves abundantly recompenced, by obtaining a portion in that transcendent felicity. What though the devils then lay wait for us, and draw us into sharp trials of our virtue; what though this body be macerated with fasting, fretted with sackcloth, fatigued with toil, and dried up with want of sleep; what though my enemy deride, or rail against, or create me mischief and

disquiet: though cold, or want, or pain, or sickness, wear out a tedious life in sighs and incessant complaints; let my strength be spent in heaviness, and my years in mourning; let me roar for the very anguish of my heart, and my body have no soundness or whole part in it, provided I may find rest in the day of tribulation, and rejoice at last in the felicity of thy chosen, and give thanks with thine inheritance.

For how can we esteem that glory according to its worth, or what can be a purchase equivalent to that happiness, in which the face of every righteous man shall shine as the sun in its strength? When the Lord shall reckon up his people, and distribute them into their respective ranks, and the degrees of bliss differing from each other, in proportion to the good they have done in their respective bodies. When he shall put the faithful in possession of those promises they so long depended upon; and in exchange for earthly, give them heavenly, for temporal and transitory, eternal and never-fading goods; and make them who have acquitted themselves well in very little, rulers over much. Nothing sure can be added to the happiness of that day,

day, when the Lord shall introduce his holy ones into his father's presence, and to make them sit down with himself in heavenly places, that God may be all in all.

O blifs inexpressible, to see the saints, to be with them, to be one of them ; to see God as he is, and to possess him for ever and ever ! O let this blifs be often in our thoughts, always uppermost, nay, only in our desires : for it deserves the whole of us, and this is the method of insuring it to ourselves. For, if the greatness of the prize put you, as well it may, upon enquiring how you can ever hope to compass it, which way you can deserve it, or what assistances are necessary for this purpose, the answer is short and ready. For God hath so ordained, that it is in every man's power to be happy, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence ; to desire, and resolve, and endeavour, and strive, is to be qualified, and no man ever failed in his attempt, who was willing to take it by force.

This kingdom is indeed an invaluable treasure, but yet every man is capable of being a purchaser, because the only price God expects for it is a man's self. Give but yourself, and this will be looked up-

on as a consideration sufficient. And therefore never be discouraged at the disproportion betwixt what you can pay, and what you can hope to receive: for the purchase is paid by another hand to the utmost farthing. This was done when Christ gave himself; and he gave himself, that he might ransom you, and make your heart a kingdom for his father to reign in. Deliver therefore yourself into his possession, that sin may no longer reign in your body unto death, but that God may dwell and reign in you by his spirit, for the attainment of everlasting life.

How eager then, my soul, should we be to return to that heavenly city, where our home and our privileges are, where we are free denizens, and have our names enrolled in the book of God? Since therefore we are fellow-citizens with the saints; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, let us very diligently represent to ourselves the glorious advantages of these characters, and the bliss of our native place, in the best light our present thoughts can set them. Let us cry out with the prophet of old, How excellent things are spoken of thee, thou city of God! All thy inhabitants are like them that sing,
Beautiful

Beautiful art thou for situation, and the joy of the whole earth. Into thy gates enter neither old age, nor decay, nor misery; no lame or maimed, no deformity or defect, but all grow up into a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

What can be wanting, what be added, to the happiness of that life, which is never threatned with poverty or sickness, never molested with wrongs or violence, with anger or envy, or exorbitant desires: where all the present necessities of nature cease; and the restless ambition of honour and power and riches find no place: where we are no longer in fear of any devil, or in danger of his temptations, or in so much as a possibility of his torments: where neither body nor soul can die, but both are endued with a life everlasting, ever delightful; no casualties, no malice, no quarrels or factions, but universal agreement, profound peace, and perfect love: where the day never declines, but a light as perpetual as it is glorious? for that city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, but the glory of God doth lighten it, and the lamb is the light thereof. Nay, the saints too shall shine as the brightness of

of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever.

Hence there is no night, nor darkness, nor clouds, no extremities of heat and cold, but such a happy temper in all respects, as no eye hath seen, or ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of any man to conceive; except those happy souls whom their own experience shall instruct, and whose names are written in the book of life. To all which we may add the honour and happiness of associating with patriarchs and prophets, of conversing with apostles, and martyrs, and saints, and all those dear relations and friends, who went thither before us. These are very glorious advantages, but that which far excels them all is, that we shall see the face of God, and ever admire and gaze upon, and rejoice in his excellent glory. O happiness inestimable, when we shall see God as he is in himself; when we shall see him, and enjoy him ourselves, and when this sight and fruition shall never have any interruption, any end.



II.

An Act of Love and Devotion.

I Love thee, O my God, and desire to love thee every day more fervently. For thou art beautiful and amiable above the sons of men, and deservest an affection equal to thy own adorable and incomprehensible excellencies. Equal to the marvellous instances of goodness, of which thy tender care for, and unspeakable condescensions in working out the eternal salvation of mankind, hath given such plentiful, such astonishing proofs. O let that fire descend into my heart, which burns with a bright and holy flame, never languishing, never to be quenched. May every part of me feel the kindly heat, may it expand itself, and burn up every other passion; that all the dross of vain and polluted passions and desires being entirely consumed, I may be turn'd all into love, and know no other object of that love, but thee alone, my dearest, sweetest, and most lovely Saviour.

By

By that most holy, that most precious blood, which thou wert content to shed upon the cross for our redemption, grant me, I beseech thee, the grace of a truly contrite and devout heart, at all times, but then especially when I approach thy Majesty in prayers and praises, and thankful commemorations of the mysterious methods of man's redemption, that most stupendous, most conspicuous and everlasting monument of the divine mercy. When I, unworthy, I confess, of so high a privilege, prostrate myself before thy altar, and assist in that heavenly sacrifice, which thou, my undefiled high-priest, hath instituted for a memorial and pledge of thy love, and for the daily repair of those breaches which sin and frailty make upon our souls, by these frequent and lively representations of that death and passion, by virtue whereof alone we are or can be saved.

While I attend upon these holy mysteries, let my mind, I most humbly pray thee, be sensibly comforted, and my faith confirmed with the joys of thy blessed presence. Let me find thee nigh at hand, and be affected as becomes one, who justly values the honour and happiness of such a union with thee. Let my spiritual de-
lights

lights be ravishingly sweet, my love of thee exceeding strong and ardent, my inward hungrings after thee refresh'd. For thou art the bread of life, every day eaten, yet still whole, and never consumed: Lord, grant me evermore this nourishment: thou art the light eternal, never eclipsed, never extinct: O shine in my heart, warm, enlighten and sanctify me, that I may be a chosen vessel for thy use, purged from all wicked filth, filled with all grace, and ever preserving that fulness. So shall I spiritually feed upon thy flesh, and feel my soul effectually sustained in the strength of this heavenly repast; so shall I be nourished unto life indeed, and living of thee, and by thee, at last be conducted to thee, and for ever rest in thee.

O banquet of love, heavenly sweet, let my bowels be refreshed by thee, my inward part overflow with the nectar of thy love, and my soul burst out with zealous expressions of thy praise continually. My God is love itself, sweeter than honey to my mouth, sustenance and joy; make me to live and grow in thee, and correct my vitiated palate, that I may truly relish thy heavenly delights, and lose all taste, all appetite for any other. Thou art the
soul

soul of my life, the staff of my hope, the end and sum of all my desires. O do thou possess my whole heart, preside over every faculty, direct my understanding, exalt my affections, and quench the thirst of my longing soul with those rivers of pleasures which flow at thy right hand for evermore. Let every fleshly and turbulent desire be awed into silence, and all imaginations of things in heaven, and air, and earth, flee from before thee. Let dreams and fancied revelations; let every word, and sign, and thought give way; and even the soul itself stand mute, go out of itself, and be employ'd in the contemplation of thee alone; for thou art my hope and my only trust: And, though the vileness of my own condition, and especially the infinite faults and frailties of my life, might reasonably shut me out from any hope, that so great and holy a God should admit so polluted a wretch into communion with him; yet in regard the word of God hath condescended to dwell in my flesh, and united his divine to our humane nature, I can with confidence look up to that powerful intercessor at thy right hand, and will not doubt but I shall one day be exalted to the same blessed place, where my flesh and
blood

blood does in my Jesus already sit triumphant. To whom be praise and glory, honour and adoration, and thanksgiving for ever. Amen.



III.

An Act of Devotion and Love of GOD.

O Blessed Jesus, my sacrifice and ransom, the delight and desire of my soul, God of God, mercifully assist the prayers of thy humble servant. On thee I call, to thee I cry with a loud voice, and from the very bottom of my heart. Thy presence I invite into my soul, O enter there and fit it up for thyself, that it may not offend thee by spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but be holy and without blemish. For sure a clean dwelling only can be acceptable to the purity of so divine an inhabitant. Do thou therefore sanctify me, a vessel made by thy own hand, and make me fit for thy own use; purge out all the remains of wickedness;

ness; fill me with thy grace, and keep me ever in that fulness, that I may be built up a holy temple, an habitation such as my God will not disdain here and for ever. O sweetest, kindest, dearest, most powerful, most precious, loveliest and most beautiful Saviour! more delicious than honey, whiter than snow, of more value than gold or precious stones, and dearer to me than all the riches, and honours, and pleasures this world can afford.

But what does all I have said amount to, my God, my only hope, my unspeakable mercy? What have I said, my sweet repose, my sure refuge, in all this? alas, I say as much as I can, though in no degree what I ought, upon so glorious a subject. O that I were capable of expressing thy excellencies in as perfect and becoming a manner, as the melodious choirs of angels do in their perpetual consorts of praise! How gladly would I then spend all my breath, and even warble out my soul in songs of thanksgiving? With what ardent, what indefatigable devotion would I proclaim thy glories in the midst of thy congregations! But if I cannot do so much as becomes me, is that a reason why I should do nothing?

No,

No, I will exert my utmost powers, and speak my best, though I can never speak enough: for woe to them that are silent on this occasion; since them who are willing thou renderest able, making even the dumb to speak; and out of the mouths of very babes and sucklings perfecting praise. Woe then to them who do not employ their tongues to thy honour, since even the greatest masters of eloquence, who use them most and best, yet in effect are dumb, and say nothing to purpose, when they do not employ their tongues to thy honour.

Who can set forth thy greatness as it deserves, O inexpressible power and wisdom of the Father? But, in regard no words are to be found sufficient to declare the omnipotent and omnipresent Word, I will at least contrive the best I can, and go the greatest length mortality is qualified for, till thou shalt receive me to thy own self, and enable me to express my praises in terms suitable to thy dignity and my duty. In the mean while it is my earnest request, that thou wouldst measure my present feeble essays, not by what I say, but what I desire to say. For it is the most vehement wish and longing of my soul, to give such praises

as I know are becoming so great a majesty to receive, and a due homage for a creature to give. And thou, my God, who knowest the secrets of all hearts, and art conscious to every motion of my soul, canst bear me witness, that heaven and earth, and all that therein is, are of small consideration with me in comparison with thee. Whatever else may challenge a place in my affection, ceases to be of any regard at all, and ought indeed to be hated, when put in the balance with my God. This is the real sense of my soul, with such unrival'd, such a fervent passion I love my God; and yet am sensible withal, that this is less than thy due, and therefore desire above all things to love thee still more and more.

O grant that I may daily grow, and continue for ever steadfast in thy love, that I may pay thee all the affection I wish I could, all I owe and should pay; that thou may'st be my only aim and end, the only object of my thoughts. Let my days be spent in meditating upon thee incessantly; and my dreams present no other idea to my imagination: let my spirit confer with thee upon my bed, and remember thee alone when waking in the night season. Let the light of thy countenance

tenance shine through every corner of my heart, that under thy government and conduct I may proceed from strength to strength, till at length I see the God of Gods in Sion; and whom I now can only take an imperfect glimpse of through a dark and broken glass, may then behold face to face, and know even as I am known. And since this is a blessing promised in a peculiar manner to the pure in heart, I entreat thee, by all that goodness and compassion which hath delivered us from death eternal, let thy most powerful holy union soften this tough, hard, rocky heart of mine, and render it susceptible of tender and good impressions, that the fire of compunction and holy zeal may be cherished there continually, and render it a daily living sacrifice unto thee.

Grant me the grace of an humble and contrite spirit, that I may come into thy presence washed clean with tears of godly sorrow. And let my affections be so inseparably united to thee, that I may have no carnal desires left, but be utterly cold and dead to this world. Let me not so much as remember transitory things for the vehemence of that fear and love I bear to God; that these momentary trifles

may no longer be matter of grief or joy, or concern to me; nor any flattering prosperity have power to byais or corrupt my heart, nor any terror of adversity to shake my constancy. And because the love of thee is strong as death itself, let this, I beseech thee, entirely possess and swallow up my soul; let that sweet and holy fire consume all the dross of worldly affections, that I may cleave to thee alone, and make it my constant meat and drink to do thy will, and know no refreshments but such as flow from the delightful remembrances of thee.

Send down, O Lord, send down into my heart thy precious odours, that I may be ravished with the fragrance of my heavenly spouse. Let the delightful relish of thy sweetness, excite in me holy and eager desires, and be in me a well of living water springing up to everlasting life. Thy greatness, O my God, is unmeasurable, and therefore the love of thee ought to be so too; for sure no bounds ought to determine the gratitude and praise of those whom thou hast vouchsafed to redeem with thy own most precious blood. O tender love of souls! O merciful Lord! O righteous judge, to whom thy father hath committed all judgment! Thou seest
and

and hast declared how fit it is, that the children of this world should not in their generation be wiser than the children of light ; that the sons of night and darkness ought to be our pattern ; and that it is just matter of reproach to us, if they shall love and pursue the perishing riches and fleeting pleasures and advantages with a more intense desire, and more unwearied endeavours than thy own servants seek and love the source and sum of their true happiness: even thee their God, who made them when they were not, and redeemed them when otherwise it were better for them not to have been at all.

And if one man love another man so fervently, if a spouse be so fond of her beloved, as not, without the utmost impatience, and even inconsolable grief, to bear the absence of a friend so dear : what affection, what zeal, what ardent desire of constant union, ought that soul to express, whom thou hast betroth'd and marry'd to thyself by faithfulness and mercies manifold ? how ought we to be conversing with and enjoying the great God, the most amiable husband, who hath loved us and saved us after so astonishing a manner, and for our sakes done so many, so great, so kind, so wonderful things ! For tho' the objects here below have in-

deed some delights peculiar to themselves, which attract our hearts, and kindle affections and desires proportioned to them; yet do not they affect us after the same manner, as thou our God, and the blessed objects above do. The righteous man rejoices in thee, because the love of thee is a calm and sweet resentment. For every breast thus disposed, is filled with an equal, secure and serene pleasure. But the love of the world and the flesh is ruffled with anxious fears, and violent emotions: it utterly destroys the peace of the soul where it takes possession, and distracts them with cares and suspicions, with jealousy and passions, and a thousand uneasy apprehensions.

Most justly, therefore, art thou the joy and delight of good men, because thou art the only haven where they are at rest; and with thee alone is that life which brings quietness and assurance, settled and sincere pleasure. He that enters into thee, enters into the joy of his Lord, where fears of future evils have no place. Fixed in this most happy station, and secure of change or danger, he can speak comfort to his soul in these words of the Psalmist, This shall be my rest for ever, here I dwell, for I have a delight therein.

And

And again, The Lord is my shepherd, therefore can I lack nothing: he shall make me to lie down in green pastures, and send me forth besides the still waters.

O that it might please my sweetest, dearest Jesus, to fill my heart with such a love of him, as never can be quenched; to be ever present in my mind, that I may be all over love, and burn with perpetual desires of his company and enjoyment. Let this desire exalt my heart, and enable it to throw off that troublesome load of worldly and sensual affections, which now obstruct and press me down, and do but add to my miseries, instead of gratifying my inclinations. And, having laid aside this heavy weight, help me to run chearfully and apace after the odour of thy ointments, still keeping on my course without incumbrance or diversion, till by thy gracious guidance I at last shall be received to thy ownself, there to be feasted for ever with the pleasures of thy beauteous presence.

For two so different passions, a good and evil, a sweet and bitter, cannot dwell together in the same breast. And therefore, if a man love any thing besides thee, the love of God is not in him. O love of exquisite pleasure, and exquisite

pleasure of love ! love, all delight without alloy of torment ; love, chaste and perfect, whose bright flame never can be extinct, but burns pure and chearful to all eternity ; my God, my Jesus, who art love and pleasure in the abstract, inflame my every part with this holy fire, pour thy transporting joys, thy inexpressible comforts and sweet raptures abundantly into my soul ; kindle there desires chaste and holy, peaceful and calm, pleasant and secure, that thus overflowing with delight, and inflam'd with desire, I may love thee, my God, with all my heart and soul, and strength : that thou may'st be always in my mind, and mouth, and sight, at all times, and in all places ; and so refresh me, that no room may be left for any other, which are indeed no better than unfaithful and adulterous passions.

Hear me, my God ; hear, thou light of my eyes, hear what I ask, and grant my petitions ; and that thou mayest hear me effectually, do thou inspire and direct my petitions. O merciful and gracious Lord ! let not my manifold offences stop thy ears against my prayers, nor shut out thy mercy from me : but let thy servant obtain his requests, though not for any merit of
his

his own, yet for the sake of HIS merits and intercession in whom alone he trusts, and by HIM alone presumes to ask any thing ; even the blessed Jesus, the Son of thy love, the One, the powerful Mediator between God and man ; who with Thee and thy blessed Spirit, liveth and reigneth for ever. Amen.



IV.

A devout Prayer to CHRIST.

O LORD Jesus, the Anointed of God, the Word of the Father, who camest into the world on purpose to save sinners ! I conjure thee by the most enlarged bowels of thy indulgent mercy, let me cease to do evil, learn to do well, and reduce all my actions to rule and due order ; take away from me whatsoever is offensive to thee, and hurtful to myself ; and implant in me all those virtues and graces which may conduce to my soul's advantage, and thy good-liking and acceptance of me. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean, but thou alone ?
Thou

Thou art a God infinite in goodness and power, justifying the ungodly, quickening them that lay dead in trespasses and sins, (Eph. ii. 1.) changing the hearts of men, and forming them into new and different creatures. Thy eyes behold my many and great imperfections; look down upon them with an eye of pity, send down thy hand of compassion from above, and remove far from me whatever is displeasing in thy sight. My spiritual health and diseases are both in thy sight, O strengthen, I beseech thee, and preserve the former, and in much mercy heal the latter.

Heal thou me, blessed physician of souls, and so shall I be healed; hold thou me up, thou Almighty preserver of men, and so shall I be safe: thou who givest medicines for the cure of our sickness, and sustaineest that health which is thy own; thou who reparaest our breaches, and buildest up our decay'd ruins with a word of thy mouth. If thou think fit (as I hope thou wilt) to sow the good seed in thy field my heart, the first part of that blessed work must be to prepare and correct the soil, by rooting out the weeds and thorns of vicious habits and dispositions, which else will choak the work, and
make

make it unfruitful. O sweetest, kindest, dearest Jesus! pour into me, I beg thee, the abundance of thy love, that there may be no remains of earthly or sensual desires or thoughts in my breast, but thou and thy love may reign unrival'd there, and possess my heart entirely. Write thy name in my mind, that thou and thy commands may be ever before mine eyes. Kindle in my soul that holy fire which thou hast sent into the world, that it may melt away my dross, and qualify me for offering to thee the daily sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit.

Sweetest Redeemer, as thou hast given me the sincere desire, so give me the attainment of thy chaste and holy love, fervent as my desire, and entire, as the sincerity with which I ask it. Let my head be waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that these may speak for me, and testify the greatness of my love, and the inward delights I feel, too big to be contain'd within my heart, and perpetually running over in tears of joy.

I frequently call to mind the devout addresses of thy servant Hannah, who came to thy tabernacle to beg a son from thee: and upon each remembrance of her remarkable piety and perseverance in prayers,

prayers, I find my self tormented with grief, and confounded with shame, for my own coldness and deadness in devotion. For, if she did not only weep, but continue weeping, in hopes of obtaining a son; what affectionate complaints, what measure of tears become my soul, which comes to thee in prayer, which seeks and loves my God and Saviour, desiring to receive him, and be receiv'd to him? what sighs and groanings, what earnest gaspings, what impatient thirstings ought I to bring, who am in pursuit of my God day and night, and desire to love and to enjoy nothing but him only? O look then upon me, and extend thy mercy to me, for the sorrows of my heart are enlarged: permit me to taste of thy heavenly comforts, and do not disdain that sinful soul, for which thou didst not grudge to die. Give me plenteousness of tears flowing from an affectionate heart, such as, by lamenting, may prevail for forgiveness of my sins, a release from the bands with which I have so long been tired, and a godly sorrow, which may produce spiritual and eternal joy. That, if I cannot arrive to that exalted pitch of zeal, with some illustrious martyrs and confessors, and eminently devout men, whose
bright

bright examples I despair of coming up with, may however not suffer myself to be out-done by the weaker sex, but be admitted to a share in thy kingdom with devout women.

Another instance of female devotion comes also often into my remembrance: Her, I mean, whose vehement affection for thee put her upon waiting at thy sepulchre; who, though thy disciples went away, would not depart with them, but sat there weeping, and deploring the suppos'd loss of her dear Lord; and rising frequently, return'd to search the empty cave with anxious eyes, not trusting her own senses, but hoping and seeking still, in despite of their former reports, to see him whom her soul loved. She had, no doubt, examined the grave with a most nice diligence before; but still her passionate desires could not be satisfied, that she had sought thee with sufficient care. For that which crowns and recommends every good work, is the virtue of perseverance. This person then, because she loved more than the rest, and expressed that love by her weeping, and sought thee carefully with tears, and still continued seeking, notwithstanding so many former disappointments,

ments, obtain'd the preference above the rest, and had the honour to find, and see, and converse with thee, before any other person whatsoever.

Not only so, but she was made choice of to be the first preacher of thy glorious resurrection. By her thou didst impart the joyful tidings to thy disconsolate disciples, and refresh their memories with thy promise of visiting them again, saying, Go tell my brethren, that I go into Galilee, there shall they see me. If then this woman wept so tenderly, who sought the living among the dead, and touch'd thee with the hand of faith, how should that soul be affected, and how lasting ought that affection to be, which believes in the heart, and confesses with the mouth, a glorify'd redeemer enthron'd in heaven, and reigning over the whole world? What sighs and tears should breath out from that heart, which loves nothing but thee, and above all things longs to gain a sight of thee: of thee, the only refuge and hope of the miserable, who art never address'd to without a comfortable expectation of mercy?

In this confidence I entreat thee, for thy own sake, and for the glory of thy holy name, to grant me such a tender
and

and affectionate sense of thy goodness, and my own unworthiness, that every time I think, or speak, or read, or write of, upon every remembrance of, every approach of my God and Saviour, in the sacrifices of prayer and praise, my eyes may overflow with tears of remorse and love. Thou the king of glory, the teacher and pattern of all virtues, hast instructed us to weep, both by thy word, and by thy own example. Thou hast said, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted: and didst thyself shed tears of compassion for thy deceas'd friend, and yet more abundantly for the ungracious city of thy people, and its approaching destruction.

By thy most precious tears, and by all the wonderful instances of thy mercy for the relief of lost mankind, I beg the grace of tears and godly sorrow, which my soul vehemently thirsts after. I cannot attain to this, unless thou vouchsafe to give it me; for it is thy Holy Spirit alone that can bring water out of this rock, and soften the hearts of harden'd sinners. This thou hast been pleas'd to communicate freely to many primitive and eminent saints, whose pious footsteps I dare to tread in. Send down thy former and
thy

thy latter rain, and water this dry soil with the dew of heaven, that I may with true compunction bewail my sin and misery ; and kindle in my heart a fervent zeal, that I may be a burnt-offering to thee, a sacrifice of sweet favour in thy presence. And let my tears wash that polluted offering, that it may be presented clean and pure. For of these I shall still have daily need ; because, though by the assistance of thy grace I consecrate myself never so devoutly and entirely to thy service, yet such is my frailty, that still in many things I shall offend. Grant me therefore this necessary grace, that I may taste of thy cup, and quench my thirst, that my soul may ever pant after thee, and burn with the love of thee alone, regardless of any other object, and getting above the vanities of sense, and miseries of the world.

Hear me, my God, hearken, thou light of my eyes, grant me my request, and grant me to ask such things as thou delightest to give. Let not my manifold offences stop the current of thy grace, whose property is to be a God hearing prayer, and always to have mercy. But, according to the multitude of thy mercies
do

thirsty soul to the rivers of eternal pleasure, to the fountain of living water, that I may drink my fill, and live for ever, O God of my life.

They are thy own most comfortable words, if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. O well of life! make good that gracious invitation to thy unworthy servant, that I may continually drink of thee, and quench my eager thirstings, and according to thy most true promise, be so fill'd with thy holy Spirit, that out of my belly may flow streams of living water. O well of life! give me drink out of thy pleasures as out of a river, satiate my soul with the delights of thy love, that I may lose all relish for vain, and sensual, and worldly joys, and fix my thoughts and desires on thee alone, and on thy sweet mercies; as holy David professes of himself, I remembred thine everlasting judgments, O Lord, and receiv'd comfort.

Shower down upon me the fructifying graces of thy good spirit, which thou wert pleas'd to represent, by the waters promis'd to be given to them that thirst. Let all my desires and endeavours make up directly to that blissful place, whither we most firmly believe thee to have gone
torty

forty days after the resurrection. That nothing but my body may be detain'd any longer in this valley of misery here below ; but my soul and all its faculties may be with thee. That where my best, my only treasure is, my incomparable best-belov'd Jesus is, there my heart may be also. In the dismal deluge, the wide unfaithful sea of this tempestuous life, we are toss'd and driven about by storms that blow from every quarter ; without port or shelter ; without one spot of dry ground for the weary dove to rest her foot upon ; no peace, no calm, no security ; but rocks and quicksands, wars and contentions and enemies on every side ; without are fighting, and within are fears.

Thou hast fram'd us out of a wonderful mixture of different parts , and join'd heaven and earth together in one man. The earthly body presseth down the soul, and hence the mind thus unequally coupled, is dragg'd back by its companion, moves heavily and is soon tir'd with its journey, nay, often languishes and sinks down in the middle of its course ; is torn and wounded by the thorny cares and vanities through which its way lies ; bruise'd by the roughness of the passage : hungry and hard bestead, and often ready to pe-

rish with thirst, in this dry, barren, desolate wilderness. Nor have I wherewithal to satisfy its cravings, being, alas! poor and destitute of my spiritual comforts. Therefore I flee to thee, my Lord and God, rich in mercies, and a bountiful giver of good gifts; imploring food in my necessity, refreshment for my weariness, balm for my wounds, and guidance for my wandrings. Behold, my soul stands at the door and knocks: O let that tender mercy of my God, whereby thou glorious day-spring from on high hath visited us, open to this importunate beggar! extend thy charity, and in a marvellous condescension take him in, that he may find refreshment and sweet repose in thee, and be fed with the bread of life, the bread of heaven: that thus sustained and strengthened, he may climb up the hill, and mounting on the wings of holy zeal, may be convey'd from this valley of tears, to the joys of the celestial kingdom.

O that my soul could fly like an eagle, bold and strong, without making any stop, or perching by the way, till it arrive at the beauties of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth! that it might feed there at the sumptuous table which thou hast prepared for the citizens
of

of the heavenly Jerusalem; and be led forth by its divine shepherd into pleasant pastures, watered by fruitful streams; that to this heart, this tempest-beaten heart, might be brought at last into harbour, laid up and rest secure in thee, my God!

O thou, who didst command the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm, come down and walk upon the waves of my heart, that all its tumultuous passions may be composed into a profound tranquillity! that all may unite into that one of love, and that love be determined upon its own proper object, even thee my chief, my only good; that I may contemplate the delight of my eyes, my dear Lord, clearly and without interruption, free from the mists and dusts of trouble and confus'd thoughts. Let my spirit take sanctuary under the shadow of thy wings, and there be protected from the scorching heats of worldly cares; that lying close under that shelter, it may sing securely with thy holy Psalmist, I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest, for it is thou, Lord, only that makest me dwell in safety.

Arm my soul with the wings of contemplation, that it may soar up to

thee: and, because my frailty, without thee, cannot but fall, support my soul, that it sink not into the bottom of this dark vale of sense: let not any interposition of the earth eclipse the sun of righteousness, and obstruct the influence of his refreshing beams, but let his light direct, and his cherishing heat warm my frozen heart in my prospects and pursuits of high and heavenly things. For, from this instant I desire to bend my course to the joys of eternal peace, and leaving the clouds and storms of these lower regions of the air, aspire to the quiet and serene, the bright and blissful mansions of ætherial light above.

Hold thou up my heart with thy mighty hand, for without thee it cannot mount upward: I hasten to the place where sweetest and most profound peace reigns undisturbed: O do thou assist and govern my flight, that by thy guidance I may come into those fruitful pastures, where thou feedest Israel with eternal truth; that my mind may dwell upon thee, the supreme wisdom, who penetratest and governeest all things. But while I aim at this ascent to thee, I find many objections and obstructions to my design: do thou, I beseech thee, remove and silence
them

them all: command, and the tempest will be still: let my soul possess it felt in quietness, and silently pass over all created objects to fix on thee: there, in her great creator, let her eyes of faith, her desires, her hopes and thoughts, immoveably rest; and no object ever divert, none entertain her, but her true and chief good, her exquisite and endless joy.

There are, indeed, many contemplations, in which a devout mind feels wonderful satisfaction; but never can it attain to that sweet tranquillity and delight, as when it meditates on thee alone. For, O how great is thy goodness, and how great is thy beauty! and how transporting are those secret pleasures which overflow the hearts of thy beloved, who love, and seek, and desire to know nothing but thee! happy are they who have no other hope: happy, whose constant employment is praying to, and conversing with thee: happy, whose solitude is spent in awful silence, and heavenly raptures, and constant watchfulness over themselves: happy, who, even while in this frail body, anticipate, so far as their condition will allow, the ineffable sweetness of their future glories.

By those life-giving wounds which
 I 4 thou

thou didst condescend for our salvation to suffer on the cross, those wounds, from whence streamed forth that precious blood by which mankind are redeemed from death eternal; wound, I beseech thee, this sinful soul of mine, for which thou didst not disdain to die: strike it through with the fiery dart of thy most fervent love, which nothing can resist: For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing the joints and marrow: strike therefore, gracious Lord, strike this hard heart of mine to the very quick; and let the waters of penitent and affectionate tears flow out in great abundance. Let me lament my present miseries day and night, and find no comfort till I am allowed to behold my fairest and best-beloved spouse my Lord and my God, in his heavenly bed-chamber. That there, for ever gazing on thy beauteous face with thy chosen, I may fall down and adore thy majesty: and, transported with rapturous and inexpressible joy, may cry out with them that love thee, Behold, I see what I have long desired, I am in full possession of my hopes; I am inseparably united to him in heaven, whom upon earth I loved with a most eager

ger and impatient, a most sincere and undivided affection: this is he whom my soul so earnestly panted after, he whom I will praise and bless, and most devoutly adore; he, who liveth and reigneth my God for ever and ever. Amen.



VI.

A Prayer in time of Affliction.

LOOK down, O Lord, with pity and compassion upon a most miserable sinner, doing the things he ought not, and enduring the things which he hath most justly deserved, every day multiplying his offences, and smarting daily under thy correcting rod for them. When I reflect upon my many and great provocations, I cannot but confess my sufferings light and gentle in comparison; and own they do by no means bear proportion to what I have incurred, and might expect. Righteous art thou, O Lord, and just are thy judgments. Yea, just and faithful is my God, and there is no iniquity in him. Thou sendest affliction,

tion, but thou sendest it upon creatures and upon sinners, and canst not therefore be charged with injustice or cruelty. For what is the utmost we groan under? How does this declare thy power, in comparison of that almighty instance of it, which commanded us into being, when we were not? How does this deserve the imputation of rigour, when set against that infinite mercy, which in wonderful pity redeemed and restored us to happiness and life, when sin had reduced us to a condition so lost and desperate, that even our being was become a curse to us?

I am abundantly convinc'd, that the events of this life are not left to the rash, uncertain hits of blind chance, but under the steady governance and wise disposal of thy good providence. I know thou lovest and takest care of all thy creatures, but more especially thy faithful servants, who repose all their hope and confidence in thy mercy, and in this confidence do cheerfully commit themselves, and all their affairs to thee. In this persuasion I most humbly pray thee, that thou wouldst deal with me not according to my sins, which have made me obnoxious to thy angry justice, but after thy own
great

great mercy, which far exceeds not only mine, but the whole world's offences. And may it please thee, when thou thinkest fit to scourge my outward man, to strengthen my inward with the grace of constancy and unwearied patience: that even in the bitterest anguish of my soul, thy goodness may still be acknowledged most thankfully, and thy praise at no time depart out of my mouth. Pity me, O Lord, and help me, according to what thou seest necessary for me both in body and soul. Thou knowest all things, and canst do all things, and livest for ever, and therefore wilt, I hope, consider my needs and my infirmities, and extend mercy and relief in thy own time, and thy own way, which is always sure to be best and and most expedient for us.



VII.

A devout Prayer for Pardon
of Sins.

O LORD Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, who didst with hands stretched

stretched out upon the cross, submit to drink the bitter cup of sufferings inconceivable, for the redemption of all mankind, vouchsafe to hear and help me this day. Behold a wretch in extreme poverty, addressing to the endless treasure of thy rich mercy: O send me not away empty and despised! I come with all the cravings of spiritual hunger, let my soul, I pray thee, be filled with good things; at least deny me not some sustenance.

And, first of all, my dearest Saviour, I freely turn my own accuser, and do so confess against myself all those transgressions and pollutions which render me unworthy of the least of thy mercies. Behold I was shapen in wickedness, and in sin did my mother conceive and bear me: but from this defilement thou hast been pleas'd to wash and sanctify me. O that I had been as careful to preserve my purity! but with shame I own, I have defiled myself anew with more and greater, and more inexcusable sins. Those I was born in, I could not prevent; they were not my fault so much as my misfortune; but the filth I have wallowed in since, was entirely of my own choice and contracting, and the transgressions I am most concern'd for, have been in the strictest

strictest sense my proper act and deed.

Nay, to add yet more to my confusion, I cannot but call to mind the great advantages of doing better, which thou, according to thy wonted mercies, hast been pleased to afford me. Thou hast separated me from the conversation of sinners, and put into my heart good resolutions of avoiding their seducements, and following thee; of assembling with the generation of them that seek thy face, and walk in the paths of righteousness; of abandoning a sensual, and devoting myself to a mortified and spiritual and divine life. And I, insensible and ungrateful wretch that I am, in return for such inestimable benefits, have, even since my entrance upon this better course, done many and grievous things against thy holy laws, and my own good intentions: instead of amending and forsaking my sins, I have added greatly to their number. Thus have I dishonoured my God, and stained and defaced that image of his in which I was created, with pride and vain-glory, and many other natural deformities, with the dismal prospect of which my poor soul is tormented and afflicted, wounded and destroyed.

Behold, O Lord, my wickednesses
are

are gone over my head, and are become like a fore burden, too heavy for me to bear. And unless thou, whose property is always to spare, and to have mercy, be pleas'd to put forth thy hand, and support me from sinking, I shall be irrecoverably lost, and swallow'd up in the great deep. Hearken, O Lord, to my cry; look down and behold my misery, how proudly the adversary of souls insults against me, saying, God hath forsaken him, I will pursue him, and take him; for there is none to deliver him. But thou, O Lord, how long wilt thou forget me? Turn, I beseech thee, and deliver my soul; O save me for thy mercies sake. Have compassion on thy child, whom thou hast made such, at the expence of infinite travail and pain, and do not so far remember my wickedness, as to forget thy own goodness. What father is he, that will refuse to rescue his son from destruction? or, what son is he who never offends, and whom the most affectionate parent chasteneth not with the rod of his love?

Consider therefore, O my Lord and Father, that though I am a sinner, I am still thy soul, I cannot cease to be so by a double title, for thou art the author and
giver,

giver, not only of my first and natural, but of my second, my spiritual and better life. Since therefore I have sinned, correct me as thou see'st expedient: but when thy corrections have reform'd me, deliver me up to thy Son. Can a mother forget the fruit of her womb? nay, tho' she should forget, yet thou, our kinder Father, hast declared, that thou wilt not forget thy children. Behold I cry, and thou hearkenest not, I am tormented, and thou comfortest me not. What shall I do, or to whom shall I betake myself, when destitute of my only support, and cast out of the sight of thine eyes? O wretched creature, how great is the happiness from which, how great the misery into which I am fallen! Whither was I going, and whither am I at last come? Where am I, and where am I not? What bliss was I making up to, and what horrors do I groan under? I aim'd at peace and joy, but behold perplexity and misery. I die, and my Jesus is not with me; and sure better it were for me not to be at all, than to be without my Jesus; better not to live, than to live without him, who is the very life of my life.

But, O my dearest Jesus, where are thy tender mercies, and thy loving kindnesses

nesses which have been ever of old? will the Lord keep his anger for ever, and will he be no more entreated? be favourable, I beseech thee, and turn not now away thy face from him, for whose redemption thou didst not turn it away heretofore, from shame and spitting. I confess, O Lord, that I am a sinner, a great and grievous sinner: my conscience reproaches me with guilt continually, and sets before mine eyes that hell and damnation, which, I am sadly sensible, are the deserv'd wages of my evil doings. I know too no remorse, no repentance of mine can be a sufficient satisfaction to thy offended justice; and therefore I take sanctuary in thy mercy alone; that mercy which can never be over-power'd by any greatness, any number of offences. Do not, I beseech thee, most merciful Lord, still write bitter things against me, nor enter into judgment with thy servant, but, according to the multitude of thy mercies blot out all my offences. O what will become of me at that dreadful day, when the books of all consciences shall be laid open, and the judge shall say of me, this is the man, and these are his works! What shall I do, or whither shall I flee, when the heavens shall declare my unrighteousness,

righteousness, and the earth shall rise up against, and open her mouth upon me? alas! I shall not have one word to alledge in my own vindication or excuse, no plea to make in bar to sentence passing upon me; but with a guilty and dejected countenance, stand trembling and amaz'd before thy judgment-seat.

O misery, misery! what shall I say? I will cry unto thee, my Lord and God; for why should I perish, and languish away in silence; and yet if I speak, my pains will not be asswag'd? and if I hold my peace, I am wrack'd with secret anguish. Mourn, my soul, mourn and weep, like a disconsolate widow, over the husband of thy youth. Howl, wretched thing, and lament, because thy spouse, thy Christ, hath divorc'd thee in his displeasure. Nay, but, O mighty avenger, do not let loose thine indignation upon me; for it is not in the nature of a mortal to sustain the power of thy wrath. Have mercy, lest I sink in utter despair; and, when my guilty reflections deject me most, let me find some refreshing glance of hope, that I be not quite swallow'd up in guilt and confusion. 'Tis true, I have lost that innocence which should preserve me, and given thee just

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reason

reason to damn me ; but thou hast not, canst not have lost that property, which is us'd to prevail for the salvation of those who have deserv'd damnation.

Thou, O Lord, wilt not the death of a sinner, neither hast thou any pleasure in the destruction of him that dieth ; so far from that, that thou thyself hast dy'd to the intent that they who before were dead might live. Thy death hath kill'd the death of sinners, and from that instant thou diedst, their life commenc'd. Since therefore our living depended upon thy dying, suffer me not, I beseech thee, to die, now thou art restor'd to life for evermore ; but if thy death reconcil'd me, much more let thy life save me. Send down thy hand from above, and deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, let them not triumph over me, neither let them say, we have devour'd him.

Who, blessed Jesus, who can ever suffer himself to distrust thy mercy and goodness, after having reconciled us to God, and ransom'd us from hell and death, with thy own dearest blood, even when we were rebels and declared enemies ? Under the shelter of this mercy I dare approach the throne of grace, and
thus

bounty, because thou hast taught me to ask, and seek, and knock: and therefore what I do is not an act of bold and rash presumption, but of becoming trust and faithful obedience.

Thou therefore, Lord, who commandedst me to ask, grant that I may receive; thou hast put me upon seeking, let me be happy in finding; thou hast bidden me knock, open when I do so; strengthen a weak, restore a lost, raise and quicken a dead wretch; and be graciously pleas'd to direct and govern my several faculties, sense, thoughts and actions, in doing that which is well-pleasing in thy sight: that for the future, I may serve thee, live to thee, and entirely devote myself to the obedience of thee. I know, O Lord, the whole of what I am is thy due, as my creator; I am sensible that more than I am is thy due, as my redeemer. And, had I it, I should owe thee as much more than I am, as thou, who gavest thyself to be man for my sake, art greater than the man for whom thou wert given. But this poor Self is all I have to offer in return, and even this I could not offer without thee: accept me therefore, I beseech thee, and draw me to thy self, that I may from henceforth be thine by
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imitation and resemblance, by obedience and love, who am already all thy own, as thy creature, and thy purchase. Even thine, O sweetest Saviour, who livest and reignest for ever and ever, Amen.



VIII.

A useful Prayer.

O Lord God Almighty, Three Persons, and One Substance, eternal and omnipresent, before all, and in all, God blessed for ever; I consecrate to thy use, and commit into thy custody, this day, and for my whole life, my body and my soul, my sight and hearing, my taste, touch, and smelling; all my thoughts and affections; my words and actions; all without, and all within me; my sensitive and intellectual faculties; my imagination and memory; my faith and my perseverance; beseeching thee in mercy to take charge of them day and night, and guard them safe from all the dangers and temptations which beset me, and attempt to enter at these avenues every hour and moment. Hear me, O

bleſſed holy Trinity, and preſerve me from all evil, and all ſcandal, and eſpecially from all deadly ſin. Protect me from the ſubtle treachery, and violent aſſaults, and perpetual hoſtilities of evil ſpirits, and ſhield me from the malice of all my enemies, viſible and inviſible; and, under thy mighty protection, conduct me ſafe at laſt to thoſe bliſſful manſions, which thou haſt prepared for them that love thee, inhabited by patriarchs and prophets, apoſtles and martyrs, confeſſors and virgins, all the holy men and women who have walked in thy fear, and done the will of their heavenly Father faithfully from the beginning of the world.

Root out from me, I pray thee, all confident boaſting, ſpiritual pride, arrogance and haughtineſs of ſpirit, and beat down my ſoul with true compunction for my ſins, and a profound unaffected humility. Open a vent for the tears of repentance; and, when thou haſt ſofter'd this rock within my breaſt, let thoſe ſtreams gush out abundantly. Deliver me, O Lord, from the ſnare of the hunter, and give not my ſoul up a prey to them that ſeek its ruin, but keep me ever ſafe and ſtedfaſt in the performance of thy will. Teach me to do the thing that pleaſeth

pleaseth thee, for thou art my God. Give me a right judgment, and a perfect understanding of divine truths, that I may have worthy apprehensions of thy unmeasurable goodness. Direct my prayers to thee on all occasions, and let me ask such things as thou delightest to give, and are best for me to receive. Kindle in my heart a holy zeal, such as may incline thy mercy effectually to blot out the remembrance of all my past offences committed against thy divine majesty. O Lord, hear; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not for thy own sake, O my God. If thou rejectest my petitions, and turnest away thy face, I die; if thou shewest the light of thy countenance, I am renewed to life. If thou regard my righteousness only, this, alas! is no better than filth and pollution, and I shall be on thy account no better than a loathsome carcase. But if thou look upon me in thy mercy, this raises my dead putrified body from the grave of sin, and breaths into me again a life of righteousness and hope. Remove far from me whatever is odious and offensive to thy pure eyes, and plant in me a spirit of charity and cleanness, that I may lift up holy hands in prayer, and not bring such

a sacrifice as is an abomination to my God. Put away from me all hurtful things, and give me such as be profitable for me. O thou blessed physician of souls, grant me balm for my wounds, and proper medicines to heal my spiritual diseases. Possess my heart with thy fear, with meekness and reverence, grant me unfeigned faith, a clean conscience, and a true charity, a tender regard to the good of my brethren; let me never favour nor forget my own miscarriages, nor ever be inquisitive after, or severe upon, the faults or failings of other people.

O be gracious and compassionate to my poor soul, to my frailties and transgressions. Visit me in my weakness, heal my sickness, refresh my languishings, and revive me from spiritual death. O! that there were in me a heart that might always fear thee, a soul that might always love thee, an understanding that might rightly apprehend and conceive worthily of thee; ears ever open to hear thee; eyes ever fixt and intent to see thee. Have pity upon me, O my God, have pity upon me; and from the throne of thy Majesty on high cast down a compassionate look; scatter the thick night of ignorance and error, and enlighten my
dark

dark soul with the bright beams of thy Holy Spirit. Give me the knowledge of discerning between good and evil; and help me to keep a constant watchful guard over myself; that I may see the things which belong unto my peace, and carefully eschew all those seducements, that would betray me into irrecoverable ruin. Above all I beg free and full remission of my manifold and grievous sins, of thee my Lord, who dy'dst to purchase it; and that, by and thro' thee I may find effectual propitiation, and comfort, and mercy, in all time of my tribulation, and anguish of my heart, in all my necessities and distresses, but especially in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment. Finally, O Lord, vouchsafe to bestow on me everlasting life, not for any works which I have done, (let them be pardon'd only, and that is sufficient, reward they cannot deserve) but for thy manifold and great mercy, upon which I throw myself entirely, as the only refuge and hope of sinners and unprofitable servants.

And now, O Lord Jesus Christ, permit, I pray thee, thy unworthy servant to express his charity, by enlarging these petitions, and let them prevail for blessings not only on myself, but others.

Grant

Grant to all princes and governours, that they may rule thy people in justice and thy fear; and establish the thrones of them that do so in righteousness and peace. Inspire thy ministers with truth and zeal, that they may agree in a right understanding of thy holy word, and diligently and unanimously prosecute their great work, by setting forth thy glory, and setting forward the salvation of all men. Let thy favour be ever present with thy holy catholick church, and every member of it, men and women, priests and people, all that believe in thee, all that labour in thy love; encrease their graces daily, and enable them faithfully to improve and persevere in every good word and work. Assist all thy servants with such kinds and degrees of thy grace, as are suitable to their respective conditions. Inspire all virgins with chastity and modesty, all persons devoted to thy service with heavenly-mindedness and purity, all married pairs with fidelity and mutual love. To all repenting sinners grant pardon and consolation; to all widows and orphans, sustenance and relief; to the helpless and oppressed, protection and justice; to all travellers, a safe return home; to all in sorrow and trouble,

patience

patience and comfort ; to all who are at sea, their desir'd port ; and to every one toss'd on the waves of this troublesome world, the haven of salvation, and the land of everlasting life. Enable those that are strong, to stand, help them that are growing in goodness to prosper and improve daily more and more ; and to all that live in sin, to wretched Me in particular, give the grace of speedy recollection, and effectual amendment.

For, O sweetest and most merciful Jesus, Son of the living God, and Saviour of the world ! I acknowledge myself a most unworthy, most miserable sinner ; but thou, O Father of mercies, who hast compassion upon all, wilt not suffer me to perish, nor cast me utterly out of thy sight : had that been thy intention, thou would'st have cut me off in the midst of my wickedness, and not have allowed me space or disposition to repent. Since therefore thou art pleas'd still to forbear punishment, and to grant me a truce, give me a heart, as thou hast given me opportunities, to make my peace with thee. Influence my mind powerfully, that I may seek, and desire, and love thee above all things, and fear above all to offend thee, and be careful constantly to please thee.

Lastly,

Lastly, O God and Father, blessed for ever, I entreat thee for all them who make charitable mention of me in their prayers, and' all who have desired to be recommended to thy favour, in those of the least and most unworthy of thy servants : for all who have done me any good offices, or are in any degree related to me, that thou wouldst hear them for me, and me for them ; and according to thy bounteous mercy preserve and govern them, and return all their kindness and charity sevenfold into their bosom. That thou wouldst impart liberally to all who are yet engag'd in their christian warfare, the succours of thy grace ; and, in thy own good time, to all who have happily finish'd their course, the consummation of reward and glory. And, O thou who art Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and End, once more I repeat that most important request, that, when the time appointed for my great change shall come, thou wilt in mercy stand by me at my last hours ; strengthen me in my great conflict, support me in my dying agonies, pluck me out of the jaws of the ravening wolf, who will then stand ready to seize and devour me ; defend me from his terrors and accusations, and
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take me for thy own: so shall I be receiv'd into the blessed company of saints and angels in thy heavenly paradise, there to rejoice, and live, and reign with thee for ever, who art over all God blessed for ever. Amen, sweet Jesus, Amen.



IX.

Devout Reflections upon the Sufferings of CHRIST.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who art made unto me of God, redemption and mercy, and salvation! I praise thee, I bless thee, I render thanks to thee, but thanks that do by no means bear proportion to the inestimable benefits for which they are due; thanks wretchedly defective in their zeal and devotion, which ought to warm this frozen heart of mine upon every remembrance of thee: not such as I am sensible I owe, but yet the best my soul can with its utmost efforts reach up to. Thou hope of my heart, and strength of my soul, let thy power supply

supply what my weakness cannot attain to; thy fervent love make up for my lukewarm affection: for though I have not yet been able to love thee so much as I ought, yet, if sincerity can be accepted instead of perfection, my conscience supports me with this testimony, that I desire however, and wish with all my soul that I were able to love thee as much as I ought to do.

O light shed from above into my soul, from whom no secrets are hid! thou seest my inward parts, and art conscious to all my desires. If any good be there, 'tis of thy inspiring; if this of loving thee be (nay, because I am sure it is) good, and from thee, enable me to perform that which thou hast made me to desire, and grant that I may love thee to a degree as exalted as thou requirest. I offer to thee thanks and praises; let not that gift be barren, and produce no worthy fruit in me, which thou hast of thy own free grace communicated; but crown and perfect thine own work: and as thy goodness first prevented me with holy desires, mov'd by no deserts of mine, so, I beseech thee, continue the same grace, in granting those desires their just accomplishment: awaken my stupidity, quicken my

my deadness, and change my cold indifference into a most sensible and fervent zeal; for this is the aim and end of all my prayers, this is the proper effect of all my reflections upon thee and all thy benefits, that the more I converse with thee, and the oftner I remember thee, the more vehemently I may love thee.

It was thy goodness, O Lord, that created me at first: it was thy mercy that, when I was created, cleans'd me from the stain of original sin: it was thy power which preserv'd me after the sanctification of baptism: it was thy clemency, thy bounty, thy long-suffering, which, notwithstanding my numberless actual provocations since, hath forborn, sustain'd, and waited for my amendment. Thou, Lord, hast long expected the return of thy prodigal child; and I, but not, alas! with equal carefulness, wait for the inspiration of thy grace, to work in me repentance and holiness of life. My God, my maker, thou that sparest me, thou that sustainest me, I hunger and thirst after thee, I gasp for and pant after thee; and as a darling, but a desolate child, debarr'd of his most indulgent father's presence, weeps and laments incessantly, and thinks of, and longs for nothing

thing but his beloved company, and wears the image of his face perpetually in his heart; so I am mov'd by the tenderest impressions, and with an eager impatience lament my distance from thee. I often think upon, and am very sensibly affected, tho' not so sensibly as I wish and ought to be, with thy sorrows and sufferings, thy buffeting and scourges, thy reproaches and revilings, thy wounds and expiring agonies; how thou wert kill'd and crucified, how thou wert enbalm'd and buried, and withal, how gloriously thou didst rise again, and how triumphantly ascend-ed up into heaven; and all this for me, sinful man, and for my salvation. These things I believe with a most stedfast faith; and in vertue of that persuation I bewail the miseries of my pilgrimage and exile from thee: I propose no other comfort to myself, comparable to that of my Lord's return to me, and do most ardently desire, as the sum and source of all my happiness, to see thy bounteous face for ever in thy glory.

Say, my soul, if thou canst, how thou should'st have been affected, hadst thou seen this Lord in person; seen the king of angels emptying himself of majesty, and condescending to converse with men,
that

that men might be exalted to live and converse with angels; seen thy offended God die, to reconcile vile offenders to himself, and so prevent their everlasting death.

O what expressions, what conceptions, what wonder can be great enough for this unparallel'd, this amazing love and goodness! but draw a little nearer yet, my soul, and take a more distinct view of this tragical, this astonishing scene. Could'st thou have seen thy dearest Saviour's side pierc'd with a spear, and would not the same weapon have pierc'd thro' thy own heart also? Could'st thou have stood by and beheld the hands and feet of him that created thee torn with nails, and fastned to the cross, and the blood which redeem'd thee gushing out in streams, and not have sunk thyself, and even expir'd, with grief and horror at the sight?

Say then withal, (but that thou canst not say) why thou dost now read, and hear, and meditate upon these things, which when seen by the eye of faith, are as certain as if present to that of the body, with so slender impression and concern: why dost not thou drink up the bitter cup of tears, since thy Jesus did for thee drink that of his Father's wrath? why dost thou

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not feel a grief too deep to be describ'd, like that of his virgin-mother, when she saw her innocent and only Son bound and scourg'd, tortur'd and slain before her face; since the relation here too is most close and dear, and, as thy Lord was hers, so art thou thy Lord's flesh and bones, a member of that body whereof he is the head?

Had I, with holy Joseph, taken my Lord down from the cross, wrapped him in spices, and laid him in the sepulchre, how happy should I have really esteemed myself, that any officious respect of mine had contributed to the honour of his interment? What glad astonishment should I have felt, had I been in company with those zealous women who were affrighted with a vision of angels, and heard that comfortable, that reviving message, Fear not ye; ye seek Jesus which was crucified: he is not here, for he is risen. These, dearest Lord, were moving objects, which thy providence did not think fit to give me a bodily sight of, but I behold them all by a distinct and undoubted faith. I see the pledges and memorials of them daily in thy blessed sacraments: and though I was not allow'd to kiss thy scars, and drop my tears
into

into the print of the spear and nails, yet, as oft as I approach thy table with deep remorse and due reverence, I there weep over thy crucified body, there contemplate the pangs of thy bitter death, there rejoyce in the triumphs of thy resurrection, there receive the effectual representation of all thou hast done and suffer'd for me; and, by a holy union with thee and all thy members, attain a greater privilege than any conversation with thee in the days of thy flesh could have conferr'd. Thou art to all intents the same Saviour, and if they that saw thee were blessed, because they believ'd, yet thy own mouth declared them no less blessed who have not seen, and yet have believ'd.

But still the sight of thee, of thy beauties, and thy glory, is the constant desire, the only end and noble reward of our faith; and, in this clouded disconsolate interval, till that can be obtain'd, my soul finds itself frequently at a loss how to express itself, what to do, whither to bend its course, or where to find its much loved Lord. Who shall tell my spouse how I languish for him; how my joy is turn'd into heaviness, and my laughter into mourning, for want of his dear presence? My flesh and my heart

faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever. My soul refuseth comfort from any other hand but thine, my joy and treasure ; for, whom have I in heaven but thee ? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. Thou hast commanded me to seek thy face, and my heart most readily replies, Thy face, Lord, will I seek, O turn not thou thy face from me, nor cast away thy servant in displeasure.

O most affectionate lover of souls, the poor committeth himself unto thee, and thou art the helper of the fatherless. O my most faithful guardian, preserve and pity me ; I am an orphan destitute of friends, and my soul is in a state of poverty and widowhood. Look upon the tears I shed for thy absence in this desolate condition ; and come, Lord Jesus, come unto me quickly, that I may be comforted ; shew me thy face, and I shall be satisfied ; discover thy glory, and my joy shall be full : my flesh and my soul thirst and pant for thee, the living God, the fountain of life, O when shall I come and appear before God ?

When will my comforter, whom I so earnestly look for, make his approaches to me ? when, O when shall I feel the joy

joy I so passionately desire, and be fill'd with the pleasures of that glorious dwelling, which I hope to reach at the end of this wearisom journey of life? Lord, if I may not yet drink of the river of thy pleasures, let me at least drink of the brook in the way. Let my tears be my meat and drink day and night, till the dawn of that glorious morning, when my soul shall be awaken'd with that most welcome call, behold thy spouse, thy Lord, the marriage of the lamb is come. All I presume to ask at present is refreshment and support under my sorrows; and that these may be such as will one day be turn'd into joy; for I know my Redeemer will come, because he is merciful and true; nor will he suspend my happiness by unnecessary delay, because he loves those that love him, and they that seek him early shall be sure to find him. To whom therefore be glory and praise for ever and ever. Amen.



X.

The pious Soul's longing for
Heaven.

LORD! how have I lov'd the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth. O glorious seat; the residence and the workmanship of the great, the mighty God: let me continue, let me encrease in this love of thee more and more. Let this weary pilgrimage be spent in advancing daily toward thee, and may the gasping of my soul after thee sanctify and comfort the labours of each day, and refresh my waking thoughts by night. Let my heart be always where my treasure is already: and, in this dry and desolate wilderness, may I feel no other thirst than that of arriving at my heavenly Canaan, and partaking in the society and the joys of that happy people who have the Lord for their God. O may that God who made both me and thee possess me in thee! not that
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I dare presume to hope for thy beauty and blifs upon the account of any deserts of my own ; but yet, the humblest sense of my own unworthiness will not sink me into despair of it, when I reflect upon the blood of him who dy'd to purchase this mansion for me. Let but his merits be apply'd to me ; let his intercessions assist my want of worth, and then I am safe ; for those merits cannot be overbalanc'd by my sins, nor were, or can those prayers be ever offered up to God in vain.

For my own part, I confess with shame and sorrow, that I have gone astray like a sheep that is lost, drawn out my wanderings and my miseries to a great length, and am cast out of the sight of my God, into the blindness and darkness of a spiritual banishment. In this forlorn estate I sadly bewail the wretchedness of my captivity, and sing mournful songs when I remember thee, O Jerusalem. As yet I am at an uncomfortable distance, and at best my feet stand only in the outer courts of Sion. The beauties of the sanctuary are behind the veil, and kept hid from my longing eyes : but I am full of hope, that the builder of this sanctuary, and the gracious shepherd of souls, will carry me in upon his shoulders, that I may there

rejoice with that gladness unspeakable, which all those happy saints feel, who are already admitted into the presence of their God and Saviour; the Saviour who hath opened this royal palace to all believers, by abolishing the enmity in his flesh, and reconciling all things in heaven and earth by his own blood.

For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and broken down the middle wall of partition, promising to give us the same degree of happiness in his own due time, which is already enjoyed by, and in thee. For thus he hath declared, that they who are worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead, shall be equal unto the angels. O Jerusalem, the eternal habitation of the eternal God! may'st thou be the second darling of my soul, and only he be preferred before thee in my affection, who shed his blood to make me worthy of thee. Be thou the joy and comfort of my languishing mind, my great support in hardships and distresses: may the remembrance of thee be ever sweet, and the mention of thy name a holy charm to drive away all sorrow from my soul.



XI.

The Miseries of the present
Life.

WELL may I seek for some relief from these contemplations of a future state, since this in which I now am yields me no diversion, no satisfaction at all ; but is a painful, and wearisome, a foul and tedious journey : a wretched, decaying and uncertain life ; a life of labour, and which is worse, a life of sin, and pride, and folly ; full of miseries and errors, and rather death than life, since in it we die daily, by the constant decays and alterations of our bodies, and the sundry kinds of deaths to which we stand every moment exposed.

And can we in any propriety of speech call this living ? does that empty thing deserve the name of life, which is bloated with tumours, macerated with pains, burnt up with fevers, blasted by an infected air, fattened with eating, brought
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down with fasting; enervated with mirth, consumed with melancholy, shortened with care, stupified with security; blown up with riches, dejected by poverty; made gay by youth, bowed down with age, broken with infirmities, and destroyed with griefs? nay, as if all these evils were too little, the conclusion of them all is the tyranny of death, which puts a speedy period to what we falsely call the joys of life, and abolishes them and wears out all the footsteps and remembrances of them so utterly, that it is from henceforth, as if they had never been at all.

And yet it is prodigious to consider how this strange mixture, for which we know not well how to find a name, this living death, or dying life, tho' in every part embittered by these and infinite other miseries; how it imposes, I say, upon the generality of mankind, and cheats them with lying promises of imaginary happiness. Nay, tho' the cheat be so gross, that the blindest of its admirers cannot but discover it; and the potion so nauseous, that the most stupid cannot but loath and be sick of it, yet still infinite are the fools that drink large draughts of its cup, and are intoxicated with the bewitching liquor.

liquor. But happy are those few, those very few, who wisely keep their distance, and will not trust themselves in its treacherous embraces; who despise its vain superficial joys, and will have nothing to do with its flattering allurements, for fear at last it prove their fate to have the deceiver and the deceived perish together.



XII.

The Happiness of that Life prepared for them that love GOD.

BUT oh! that life which God hath laid up in store for them that love him! that life indeed! that happy, secure, serene, and most amiable, that pure and holy life: that life which fears no death, which feels no sorrow, which knows no sin, which languishes under no pain, is distracted with no care, is ruffled with no passion, lies at the mercy of no accidents: that incorruptible, that unchangeable life, which hath every thing that can attract our affections, and command our esteem.

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There will be no enemies to assault us, no envy to undermine us, no temptation to seduce us, no fears to confound us, but perfect love and harmony of souls; a day that never declines, a light that never goes out: there we shall see God face to face, and when we awake up after his likeness, our souls shall be satisfied with it.

O let me indulge this delightful thought, and run over all the beauties and blisses with an unwearied desire! for the more I consider, the more passionately fond I grow of thee, and feel no pleasure comparable to the sweet reflections upon, and impatient thirstings after thee. Here will I dwell, for I have unspeakable delight therein. Upon this will I fix my eyes, my heart, my studies; to this will I direct all my desires, and conform all my dispositions. This subject let me speak and hear of continually, let it be my theme to write on, my entertainment in conversation. I will spend my private hours in reading of its bliss and glories; I will meditate frequently upon what I have read of it; that thus at least I may find some refreshment, some loose from the miseries, and toils, and incumbrances of a troublesome perishing life:

life: and at last recline my weary head, and lay me down to sleep with joy, when I know that sleep shall be shaken off again, and the blessedness of this life, truly so called, immediately commence upon my waking.

This makes me walk with such delight in the pleasant gardens of the holy scripture; here I am diligent to gather the sweet flowers of God's word and promises; I devour them by reading, I chew the cud upon them by frequent recollection; I lay them up in my memory as a most valuable treasure; and by tasting and feeding upon these delicious descriptions of another world, I take off great part of the bitter and nauseousness of this world.

O happy state! O truly glorious kingdom! without succession, without confusion! where time is no longer measured by the revolutions of days and nights, summers and winters; but eternity is continued thro' one endless day, one ever-blooming spring. Where they, who have been victorious in their spiritual warfare, join in consort with the blessed angels, and sing the songs of Sion without ceasing. There a never-fading crown adorns every head, and exquisite joy overflows every heart.

heart. Oh that my sins were blotted out, my pardon sealed! O when will it please God to give me leave to lay down this load and lumber of flesh, and admit me without spot or corruption into the true rest, the transporting delights of that blissful place! that I may walk about the beauteous walls of the city of God, view all her palaces, and receive a crown at the hand of my merciful judge. When shall I make one in that holy choir, and behold the majestick presence of my Maker, with the spirits of just men made perfect? when shall I see my dear Redeemer face to face, and approach that unspeakably bright, and as yet inaccessible light, which flows from the Sun of righteousness? when, O when shall I be freed from the bondage of the fear of death, and possess the uninterrupted joy of an endless incorruptible state, conferred upon me by the bounty of my God?



XIII.

The Happinefs of holy Souls at
their Departure out of this
World.

HAppy the foul, which, refined from this dross of earth, and got loose from its incumbrance of a body, soars up to heaven, and takes its dwelling there, secure from any future assaults, and triumphant over death. Then does it feast upon the beauteous face of that dear Lord whom it serv'd, and lov'd, and long'd to enjoy, in that glory, and glad immortality to which it is at last arriv'd. A glory and gladness which no length of time will wear out, no envious adversary can take away. This is the spouse, which the daughter saw and blessed her ; the queens and the concubines and they praised her. Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness leaning upon her belov'd ? Who is she that goeth up as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible
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as an army with banners? With what eager joy does she fly to the arms of her Lord, when with a joyful astonishment she hears the voice of his most affectionate call; Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away? for lo! the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; O my dove, thou art in the clefts of the rocks, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely, (Cant. ii. 10, &c.) Come my chosen, my fair one, my dove, my spouse, and I will receive thee into my throne, for, I have long'd for thy beauty. Come and rejoice before me with the angels, to whom I have promised to make thee a companion. Come after long toils and many dangers, and enter thou into the joy of thy Lord, a joy which no man taketh from thee.



XIV.

A Prayer for Succour in Trouble
and Danger.

BLESSED are all thy saints, my God and king, who have travelled over the tempestuous sea of mortality, and have at last made the desir'd port of peace and felicity ; fearless of future hazards, and full of perpetual joy. This sea, thou, my Saviour, didst condescend to try and be tost upon. O cast a gracious eye upon us who are still in our dangerous voyage. Thou art possesst of never-fading glory, but do not in the midst of thy own happiness, forget those who are beset with vast variety of miseries. Thou hast chosen us to thyself, and what we are or hope to be, is all thy gift ; thou hast promised to make us immortal with and by thyself, and to bestow upon us the everlasting felicity of thy presence ; O remember and succour us in our distress, and think on them who lie exposed

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to the rough storms of troubles and temptations.

Thou art the beautiful gate of heaven, the door at which the sheep must enter; but we alas! lie groveling here below, and our soul cleaveth to the dust. Stretch forth thy hand, and raise us up; strengthen our weakness, that we may do valiantly in this spiritual war, who of ourselves are not able to stand against the mighty force that comes against us. Help us against our enemies power; help us against our own negligence and cowardice, and defend us from the treachery of our own unfaithful hearts. We are exceeding frail, exceeding weak and despicable, slaves to intemperance and lust, and indisposed to every virtuous and gallant undertaking. And yet, helpless wretches as we are, when lifted under thy banner, and born up by thy cross, we are buoy'd up in faith, and commit ourselves boldly to this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts, where is that Leviathan, that serpent ready to devour; wherein are rocks and quicksands, and other dangers without number, on which the careless and the unbelieving run their vessels, and suffer shipwrack daily.

Intercede

Intercede for me therefore, most gracious Saviour, that, by thy powerful mediation, and all-sufficient merits, I may be able to bring this vessel and its lading safe to shore; and be conducted to the haven where every pious soul would be, the haven of peace and salvation, of uninterrupted rest, and never-ending joy.



XV.

The pious Soul's Desire of Heaven.

O Heavenly Jerusalem, our common mother, the holy city of God, thou beautiful spouse of Christ, my soul hath loved thee exceedingly, and all my faculties are ravished with thy charms. **O** what graces, what glory, what noble state appears in every part of thee! most exquisite is thy form, and thou alone art beauty without blemish. Rejoyce and dance for joy, **O** daughter of my king, for thy Lord himself, fairer than all the sons of men, hath pleasure in thy beauty.

O how happy will my soul perceive it self, when it shall be admitted to see thy

glory, thy beauty ; to view the gates, the walls, the streets, the stately buildings, the splendor of thy inhabitants, and the triumphant pomp of thy king enthroned in the midst of thee : for thy walls are of precious stones, and thy gates of pearl, and thy streets of pure gold, continually resounding with loud Hallelujahs. Thy houses are founded upon hewn square stone, carried up with sapphire, covered in with gold, and no unclean person can enter into thee, no manner of pollution abide within thy borders.

Sweet and charming are thy delights, O holy mother of us all. Subject to none of those vicissitudes and interruptions which abate our pleasures here below. No successions of night and day, no intervals of darkness, no difference of seasons in their several courses. Nor is the light derived from artificial helps, or natural luminaries, the same with ours ; no lamps or candles, no shining of the moon or stars, but God of God, and Light of Light, even the Son of righteousness shines in thee, and the white immaculate lamb, he it is that enlightens thee with the full lustre of his majesty and beauty. Thy light and glory, and all thy happiness, is the incessant contemplation

tion of this divine king ; for this king of kings is in the midst of thee, and all his host are ministring round about him continually.

There are the melodious choirs of angels, there the sweet fellowship and company of the heavenly inhabitants ; there the joyful pomp of all those triumphant souls who from their sore trials and travels thro' this valley of tears, at last return victorious to their native country. There the goodly fellowship of prophets, whose eyes God opened to take a prospect of far distant mysteries. There the twelve leaders of the christian armies the blessed apostles ; there the noble army of the martyrs ; there the convention of confessors ; there the holy men and women, who in the days of their flesh were mortified to the pleasures of sin and the world ; there the virgins and youths, whose blooming virtues put out early fruits, and ripen'd into piety far exceeding the proportion of their years. There the sheep and lambs, who have escap'd the ravening wolf, and all the snares laid for their destruction. These all rejoice in their proper mansions ; and, tho' each differ from other in degrees of glory, yet all agree in bliss and joy, diffus'd to all in

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common ;

common ; and the happiness of every one is esteem'd each man's own.

For there charity reigns in its utmost perfection, because God there is all in all, whom they continually behold, and beholding continually admire, and praise and love, and love and praise without intermission, without end, without weariness, or distraction of thought. This is their constant, their delightful employments. And, O how happy shall I be, how exquisitely, how incessantly happy, if, when this body crumbles into dust, I shall be entertain'd with that celestial harmony, and hear the hymns of praise to their eternal king, which troops of angels, and saints innumerable are ever singing in full consort! How happy myself to bear a part with them, and pay the same tribute to my God and Saviour, the author and the captain of my salvation! To behold his face in glory, and be made partaker of those gracious promises, of which he hath given me the comfortable hope, when saying to his Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold the glory which I had with thee before the world was. And again, supporting his disciples against the tribulations

lations they should encounter here below, If any man love me let him follow me, and where I am, there shall also my servant be. And in another place, He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.



XVI.

An Act of Praise.

BLESS the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. O praise the Lord, all ye works of his, in all places of his dominions; praise the Lord, O my soul. Let us magnify that great God, whom angels praise, whom dominions adore, whom powers fall down and tremble before; whose excellent glory Cherubim and Seraphim proclaim with loud incessant voices: let us then bear a part too in this heavenly song, and together with angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven, laud and magnify that glorious name; let us tune our voices

up with theirs, and tho' we cannot reach their pitch, yet will we exert the utmost of our skill and power, in this tribute to the same common Lord; and say with them, as poor mortals are able, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts; heaven and earth are full of thy glory; glory be to thee, O Lord most high.

For these are the happy spirits, who offer a sacrifice of pure praise before the throne of God continually, who are ever wrapt in the contemplations of his perfections; and see them, not like us thro' a glass darkly, but near at hand, and face to face. What tongue can express, what thought conceive, the admirable beauty, the exact order, the numberless multitude of this heavenly host? The inexhaustible source of joy springing from the beatifick vision; the fervent love which ministers delight without torment; the ever-growing desire, which rises with their satisfactions, and the grateful satisfactions, which crown that desire; a desire always eager, and never uneasie, always full, and never cloy'd: the blessedness derived down to them, by their inseparable union to the fountain of all bliss; the light communicated to them from the original light; the happy change into an immuta-
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ble nature, by seeing the immutable God as he is, and being transformed into the likenets of him they see?

But how, alas ! should we hope to comprehend the divinity and bliss of angels so far above us, when we feel ourselves unable to find out the nature and perfections of this very soul within us? What sort of being must this be, which inspires a lump of dead flesh with life and activity, and yet, when most desirous so to do, cannot confine its thoughts to holy exercises? What a mixture of power and impotence is here? How great, and yet how poor and little is this principle, which dives into the secrets of the Most High, searches the deep things of God, and expands itself to celestial objects, at the same time that it is forced to employ its talent in the invention of useful arts, and to serve the necessities of a mortal life? What sort of creature is this, that knows so much of other things, and so little of itself; so ingenious in matters abroad, so perfectly in the dark to what is done at home? Specious, but very disputable notions have indeed been advanced concerning the origin of our soul, but all we know of it amounts at last to this; That it is an intellectual spirit, created

ated by the Almighty power of its divine Maker, endued with such an immortality as he was pleased to qualify it for; enlivening and sustaining a body subject to change, corruption, and death, and liable to all the unequal affections of fear and joy, and every turbulent passion, that in their turns exalt and depress, enlarge or contract its powers.

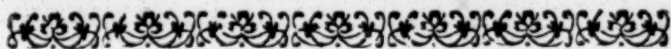
And what an amazing thing is this now! the more we attend to it, the more we shall find ourselves lost in wonder. When we read, or speak, or write of God, the great creator of the universe, we can deliver ourselves clearly and distinctly, tho' at the same time his perfections be too vast for our words to express, or our minds to comprehend; the subject, not of an adequate conception, but of an awful astonishment. But when we descend lower, and treat of angels and created spirits, of souls united to bodies, and beings of the same level with, or a condition inferiour to, our own; we are not able to support our ideas with proofs so incontestable; and find it impracticable to satisfy ourselves or others in the enquiries concerning them. Why then should we to so very little purpose, hover uncertainly about these lower regions, and
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spend our time and pains in groping in the dark? no, let our minds rather enlarge their thoughts, and take a nobler range; let them leave all created objects behind, and run, and mount, and fly aloft: and, taking faith to the assistance of reason, fix their eyes with the utmost intenseness our nature will bear, upon the Creator, the universal Cause. Yes, I will make a ladder, like that of Jacob's, reaching from earth to heaven, and as by rounds, go up from my body to my soul, from my own soul to that eternal Spirit that made it; who sustains, preserves it always with me, about me, above me; thus skipping over all the intermediate stages of beings, and re-uniting my own soul to him, from whom it came, and in whose image it was created.

Whatever bodily eyes can discern, whatever leaves impressions upon my imaginative faculty, shall be resolutely set out of the way, as a hindrance to that more abstracted contemplation, which my mind is desirous to indulge. A pure and simple act of the understanding, is that which must carry me up, and boldly soar at once to the creator of angels, and souls, and all things. And happy is that soul, which, refusing to be detained by
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low and viler objects, directs its flight to the noblest and most exalted, and, like the eagle, builds its nest in the top of the rocks, and keeps its eye steddy upon the Sun of righteousness: for no beauty is so charming, no pleasure so transporting, as that with which our eyes and mind are feasted, when our greedy sight and eager affections are determin'd to our God and Saviour, as to their only proper center; when, by a wondrous mystical, but true and spiritual act of vision, we see him who is invisible; behold a light far different from this which cheers our senses, and taste a pleasure infinitely sweeter than any this world and its joys can afford: for this is a short and unsincere pleasure; this is a dim and feeble light, confined to a narrow space, always in motion from us, and in few hours put out by constant returns of darkness: these are enjoyments which the Great Creator hath distributed to brutes, nay, to the vilest of insects, in common with mankind; and therefore let us thirst and aspire after such as are truly divine; for what even swine and worms share with us, cannot deserve the name of light and pleasure, but, in comparison of those more refined, are to be esteemed no better than pain and night.

XVII. How



XVII.

How GOD may be seen and
possess'd of Man.

THIS supreme and immutable being, this glorious Sun that never sets, this true, unclouded, and eternal light, the light of angels and men, cannot indeed be seen with mortal eyes, nor must we hope in this life to approach it, that blessing is reserv'd for glorified saints in heaven; and therein chiefly does the excellence of their reward and happiness consist. But yet are we not even now shut out from all perception of it neither: for to believe in, to meditate upon, to understand, and ardently to thirst after God, to make him the sole object of our thoughts and desires; this is in some sense to see, and to possess him. And since our capacity extends thus far at present, let us exert those little powers we have; let our voices be lifted up on high, and our souls make God their study; and let us, to the best of our ability, entertain him

him with his own praises. For it is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that the creature should publish the goodness of the creator; since he created us for the illustration of his happiness, not to stand in need of any glory we can give him, nor can we add to what he hath already.

For he is power incomprehensible, possessing all things, and self-sufficient. Great is our Lord, and great is his power, yea, and his wisdom is infinite. Great is our Lord and marvellous, and worthy to be praised. Let this then be the object of our love; this the subject of our song; this the ground of our labour and studies. And let our mind, and tongue, and hands be continually exercised in desiring, speaking, singing, writing of him. Let the delights of this heavenly rhetoric be our daily food and feast, that filled with this divine nourishment, we may cry out with the most earnest contention of heart and voice, with joy and gladness, and most fervent zeal, and daily proclaim the excellencies of our God.



XVIII.

A devout Prayer to CHRIST.

MY hope, my Christ, my God, Saviour and lover of men, thou light and way, thou life and health; thou glory and grace of all that love and serve thee! look down from the throne of thy majesty, and in the midst of bliss, remember the injuries and sufferings, the scourges and the cross, the wounds and death which thou endurest; and think with favour on thy suppliant, for whose sake thou wast pleased to endure and do so much.

Thou art my living and true God; my holy Father, my gentle and kind master, my great king, my good shepherd, my only teacher, my most ready and effectual helper, my dearest and most beautiful spouse, my true and living bread, my everlasting high-priest, my guide to my own country, my true light, my right way, my best wisdom, my holy delight, my unspotted purity, my reconciliation
and

and peace, my sure defence; my most desirable portion; my eternal health; my unbounded mercy; my invincible patience; my unblemished sacrifice; my perfect redemption; my assured hope; my universal charity; my resurrection from the dead; my everlasting life; my joy and beatifick vision for ever. Of thee I beg that I may walk by thee, come to thee, rest in thee, O thou way, thou truth, thou life, without which no man cometh to the Father. Thou, even thou, art the blessing my soul wants, and most earnestly desires, my sweetest, loveliest, only Lord.

O brightness of thy Father's glory, who from thy throne far above the Cherubim seest all the secrets of the great deep: thou true, enlivening, unexhausted light, which angels long to be illuminated with, and spend glad ages in beholding: spring forth into my soul, and scatter the thick darkness there, that the brightness of thy love may shine and shed itself through every corner of my benighted heart. Give me thyself, O God, give me thy love in return, for that I love thee thou knowest; and if it be too little, I desire to love thee more ardently. I cannot make such exact reckoning of my
love,

love, as to know how much I fall short of that affection which I ought to have, that so my every action and desire might carry me to thy embraces, fly to thy arms, and never cease the pursuit of my Lord, till I be hid in the secret place of thy presence. But tho' I cannot take a precise measure of my defects, and how much better I ought to be, yet this I know, and from my own experience can declare, that all without, nay, all besides thee avails me nothing; all about, all within is desolation and misery; whatever the foolish world calls plenty, is nothing; and all but my God is poverty, and the very extremity of want.

For thou alone art that God, which cannot admit of either diminution or increase; to thee to live and to be happy is the same thing, who art happiness itself. But thy creature, with whom these things may be separated, and who may either not live, or live and be unhappy, ought to ascribe the whole benefit of both life and happiness to thy sole gift and favour. Hence it is that we stand in continual need of thee, but thou hast none of us: for, if we had no being at all, that would not lessen in any degree that happiness, which is inseparable from thy Being; nay, is in-

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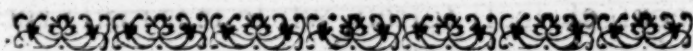
deed thy very Being. It is therefore absolutely necessary for us to cleave stedfastly to the Lord our God, that by thy continual assistance we may be enabled to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. For this load of flesh and frailty cumbers and drags us down, but the gifts of thy Spirit are a happy counterpoize to this heavy clog. By these we feel the sluggish mass warm'd and put into motion; we rise and mount upwards in heart and mind; we sing songs of degrees, and inflam'd with thy divine fire, burn with holy zeal and soar aloft successfully.

But whither is it that these flights would carry us? Even to the peace of Jerusalem; according to that of the Psalmist, I was glad when they said unto me, we will go into the house of the Lord. There hath his goodness prepared a place for us, that the sum of all our wishes and desires should be to set up our rest there for ever. For, in regard we are absent from the Lord, during the time of our sojourning in this tabernacle of the body, we have (it is manifest) no continuing city here, but are seeking one to come; we lodge in a moveable tent, and are travellers and strangers in a foreign land, but
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we are free denizens of heaven, and our home, and all our privileges and properties are there. I will therefore move under the conduct of thy grace; I will retire into the closet of my heart, and entertain my soul with songs of love to thee, my king and my God, with tender sighs and groanings which cannot be utter'd, in the house of my pilgrimage, which the contemplation of thy righteousness shall soften, while it is made the subject of my joy and praise.

And can I think upon Jerusalem without stretching forward all the desires of my soul to that region of bliss? Jerusalem, the country, the common mother of us all; and thee my God, that reignest there in glory; the light of that holy city, the father and defender, the governor and the shepherd; the chaste, but exquisite delights that abound there; the substantial joy, and all the unspeakable felicities united in thee, who art the true, the supreme, the only felicity of thy people. O let me not, I beseech thee, turn back, or go out of the way, but proceed continually in my affections, till thou at last bring my whole spirit, and soul, and body into the peaceful mansions, where my heart is already fixed: the first fruits

of the spirit I already taste, impart to me the whole lump, and satiate my soul with the joys which I now anticipate. Collect my scatter'd thoughts, and take off the blemishes and deformities of my present frailties, till thou hast wrought me up to a resemblance of thy beauty, and establish'd me for ever in the glories of thy blessed presence, O God of my mercy.



XIX.

The Soul's earnest Longings
after future Happiness.

LIKE as the hart panteth for the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after thee, O God. O fountain of living water, when shall I approach thee, who have travell'd through this dry, and desolate wilderness, in which there is no way; that my soul may be satisfied with the plenteousness of thy mercy? Behold, O Lord, I thirst, thou art the well of life, O quench my thirst. Yea, after the living God do I thirst; O suffer me to drink of thy pleasures, and hasten that day

day of praise and thanksgiving ; that day which thou, O Lord, hast made, that thy servants may rejoyce and be glad in it. O glorious day ! O everlasting morning ! whose sun never declines, in which I shall hear that most transporting sentence, Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. Into that joy, where are things great and unsearchable, yea, marvellous things without number. A joy without conclusion, without interruption, without allay ; where we shall meet with all we can wish, and rest secure from all we can fear ; free from the enemy's assaults, from the tempter's seducing insinuations ; full of security, and rest, and peace, blessed with the ravishing vision of the Deity, for ever ; such is the joy of thy Lord thy God.

O joy most exquisite, most excellent, most comprehensive ; above which, in comparison of which, beside which, there is no joy. When shall I enter into thee, and behold my God that dwelleth in thee ? What is it that detains me from him whom my soul loveth ? How long shall it be said unto my eager heart, wait, wait patiently ? And now, O Lord, what do I wish and wait for ? Surely it is for thee, my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,

who shall change our vile body, that it may be like unto thy glorious body. Surely it is for my Lord's coming to the marriage, that he may admit me into the bride chamber. Come quickly Lord, and do not tarry. Come, Lord Jesus, in, and visit us in peace and favour. Come and unlock our prison doors, that thy released may rejoice before thee with a perfect heart. Come thou desire of all nations, shew the light of thy countenance and we shall be whole. Come, my light, my Redeemer, and set my soul at liberty, that I may give thanks unto thy holy name. How long must I continue to be tossed upon the waves of this mortal life, crying unto thee, O Lord, and thou hearest not? Bow down thine ear, I beseech thee, and listen when I call out of the deep, and bring me to the haven of everlasting bliss.

O happy souls, who are deliver'd from the perils of this sea, and got safe to shore; who have reach'd their native country, and exchang'd their prison for a palace! happy those combatants, who have received that crown of glory, which they endur'd the fight of various afflictions to obtain, and are now translated from short tribulations to endless triumphs!

umphs! happy beyond all expression, who have put off their load of frailty and suffering, who are in quiet possession of the glory which fadeth not away, and clothed with majesty and honour! O blessed state, O kingdom everlasting, where the souls of the saints are in peace and felicity, where eternal rejoicing is upon every head, and sorrow and sighing flee away. Where the saints reign with thee their belov'd Lord, and deck themselves with light as with a garment. O kingdom ever blessed, in which thou, Lord, the hope and crown of all thy faithful servants, makest them glad with the joy of thy countenance, and that peace which passeth all understanding. Their joy knows no bounds, their mirth no sorrow, their health no pain, their light no intervals of darkness, their life hath no death, their happiness is universal, without the least mixture of evil: their youth is ever fresh and gay, their beauty always blooming, their love ever fervent, their pleasures have no abatement. For thou, O God, art their all in all, their sole, their chief, their perfect good.

But the more we admire the happiness of them who are exalted to this secure and blissful state already, the greater

cause have we to bewail our own misery, who are still expos'd to all the storms and shipwrack of a tempestuous and troubled sea: for we, alas! can only hope the best, but are not sure that we shall ever make the port of everlasting life and salvation. For our life is a state of exile and captivity, our end unknown, our fate wrapped up in clouds of a dark futurity. We lie at the mercy of winds and waves, and cast many a weary and longing look, to the land of our hope and rest. But, O thou stay of our souls, our refuge and strength, whole light, like the sailor's star, shines through the thick clouds that hang over our heads; steer, we beseech thee, this floating vessel with the helm of thy cross, lest the deep swallow us up. Draw us out of these surges to thyself our only comfort, whom now our weeping eyes can but just discern, standing afar off, like the dawn of the morning star, to conduct and receive us to the wish'd-for regions of light: we are thy redeemed, and as such cry unto thee; captives indeed at present, but such as thou hast ransomed with thy most precious blood. Hear us, O God of our salvation, thou that art the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of them that
remain

remain in the broad sea. Thou standest upon the shore, and see'st our dangers, and how our vessel works in the storm; O save us for thy name's sake, and so direct our course, that we may happily decline those rocks on every side, which if we strike upon we are dash'd to pieces. Thou knowest the value of our cargo, and the difficulties of the voyage. Save, Master, or we perish.

This is our distressed condition at present, but when thou hast brought us home to thyself, the fountain of wisdom and Father of lights, such complaints and all occasions for them shall cease. Then in thy light shall we see light; not such as our corporeal eyes are now blest'd with, but light unbodied, incorruptible, unquenchable, uncreated, the inaccessible, the true, the divine light, that which enlightens angels, and is the privilege and joy of saints, even the source of light and life, even thee, my Lord and my God. For thou art the light, in whose light we shall see light, that is, behold thee and in thyself, and face to face. Which what else can it import, but, as thy blessed apostle hath very justly explained it, knowing as we are known; being let into a distinct view and knowledge

ledge of thy truth and glory? So that to see thy face, is in effect to know the power of the Father, the wisdom of the Son, the clemency and goodness of the Holy Ghost, and the myſterious adorable union of all Three in One undivided eſſence. And thus to ſee the living God, is the moſt exalted happineſs, the honour and reward of bleſſed ſpirits, the crown of glory and eternal bliſs, the beauty of peace, the paradise of God, the heavenly Jeruſalem, and that fulneſs of joy which no finite mind can comprehend. For this is the utmoſt bleſſedneſs of glorified man, to ſee him who made heaven and earth, the infinitely good Being, which created, and ſaved, and brought him to bliſs and glory with himſelf. This ſight conſiſts in a clear knowledge of him, in loving and admiring, in praiſing and poſſeſſing him. For he is the inheritance of his people, even of the ſpirits whom he hath purchaſed of old. He is their portion, and the recompence of their hopes and holy labours. When therefore we ſhall ſee thee, the only, the true, the living, the almighty, infinite and incomprehenſible Father; and thy only begotten, conſubſtantial and co-eternal Son, whom thou ſenteſt into the world for our ſalvation,

[III]

tion, by the Power of the Holy Ghost; when we shall see those Three Persons in the unity of that Spirit One only divine essence, besides whom there is no God; then shall we actually possess what we now solicitously labour after; even that everlasting life and glory, which thou hast prepared for them that love thee, laid up for them that fear thee, and the portion of them that seek thy face continually.



XX.

A concluding Prayer to the
HOLY TRINITY.

O Holy, blessed, and glorious Three, co-eternal and co-equal Persons and One true God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; thou that alone inhabitest eternity, and that light to which no mortal can approach; thou hast founded the earth by thy power, and rulest all the kingdoms of it by thy wisdom; Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth! strong and terrible, merciful and just, worthy to be praised, admired and loved above all things,
by

by every creature capable of paying thee this tribute ; power, wisdom and goodness, One undivided Trinity, look down with pity, and give ear to the calling of thy poor servant, who humbly begs admission into the gates of righteousness, that he may render due thanks to thy glorious name. I praise, and bless, and acknowledge Thee, both in heart and voice ; even Thee, O Father, begotten of none ; Thee, O Son, the Only-begotten of the Father ; Thee, O Holy Ghost, eternal comforter : to this holy and undivided Trinity, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.



St. BERNARD'S JUBILEE on
the Sacred Name of JESUS.

JESUS, my mem'ry's sweet employ,
Ev'n distant gives my heart true joy ;
But honey, nor all earth's delight,
Regale like his obliging sight.

2 There's nothing can be sung more sweet,
Nothing the ears more pleasant greet,
Nothing be sweeter thought upon,
Than JESUS, God's beloved Son.

3 JESUS

3 JESUS the penitent's good hope,
JESUS the suppliant's aim and scope:
To those that do but seek, how kind?
But what, O what to those that find!

4 JESUS, of hearts the sweet delight,
The fountain of their life and light;
Joy, that all other joys transcends,
And ev'n beyond desire extends.

5 Our stamm'ring tongues can never tell;
Letters and words but vainly swell;
Th'experienc'd can believe alone,
What 'tis to love God's only Son.

6 JESUS I seek when on my bed;
The world shut out of heart and head;
Private or publick, when I move,
JESUS I'll seek with eager love.

7 I'll run with MARY by day-break,
My JESUS in the tomb I'll seek;
With my heart's love, complaint, and cry,
With heart I'll seek, and not with eye.

8 My tears shall on his tomb distil,
My sighs and groans the concave fill;
I'll throw me at his foot of grace,
And there hold fast with strict embrace.

9 JESU! of kings the wondrous king,
O'er death and hell thy triumphs ring;
In whom all grace and sweets conspire,
For love's full object of desire.

10 Abide

10 Abide with us, and ever, Lord,
Illumination true afford :

Then shall we this vain world despise,
And heav'nly love victorious rise.

11 Thy grace exub'rant's understood,
By characters of thy own blood :
Where dying love, and clouded light,
Restore us life, and God's dear sight.

12 Then let all JESUS seek, and burn
With heav'nly love, in love's return :
Whilst th' odour of his ointment draws,
And his all-clement scepter awes.

13 Ah! me, sweet JESU, let me prove
The force of thy ecstasick love,
Whose longing eyes are waiting thee
Inthron'd in glory high to see.

14 Tho' I'm unworthy thee to name,
I cannot but thy praise proclaim;
For boiling love oft makes us bold,
Breaks way, and runs like molten gold.

15 Thy love, thy self, O JESU blest,
Is our true food, and heav'nly feast,
Where appetites nor cloy, nor tire,
But fill'd of thee have fresh desire.

16 Thou art, when sounding in our ears,
The musick of the heav'nly spheres.
I'th' mouth heav'ns virgin-honey art,
And heav'nly nectar in the heart.

17 Ah!

17 Ah! bless'd expert of joys divine,
Inebriate with the kingdom's wine,
So rapt, their JESUS to admire,
That of all else they've lost desire.

18 My soul each moment thee requires,
To ease my languors, quench my fires;
And still what transport when I find,
And thee in warm embraces bind!

19 Now, now I see what I admire;
My arms inlock my life's desire:
I'm held i'th' galleries of love,
Intranc'd in flames like theirs above!

20 'Tis paradisial love descends,
Heav'n's flame thro' all my vitals sends,
Pierces the center of my soul,
And reigns in joy without controul.

21 O blessed conflagration dear,
Of heart's conjunction in love's sphere!
O cool refreshment, sweet in one,
To love, and love God's only Son!

22 Fair virgin flow'r, of virgin bed,
With lilly white, and rosy red,
Grow in my heart, then praise shall rise,
Heav'n's best perfume and sacrifice.

23 JESU, than sun more charming, calm,
More odorous than Gilead's balm;
Sweet to my taste, all sweets above,
To my eye loveliest of all love.

24 Thou

24 Thou art my soul's supreme delight,
 Consummate love's meridian height;
 My conquest, glory, JUBILEE,
 Salvation universally.

25 O come enlarge thy triumphs here,
 JEHOVAH's right hand, consort dear,
 And all thy enemies trod down,
 Come sway thy scepter, wear thy crown.

26 Hail prince of might ineffable,
 Victorious over death and hell;
 The fountain whence all graces rise,
 And the sun-flow'r of paradise.

27 Ye orders bright of heav'nly pow'rs,
 Lift up the everlasting doors:
 To the triumphant conqu'ror sing,
 Hail, JESU, of all kings the king!

28 Thee all the angelick quires proclaim,
 And shout in thy imperial name;
 Who reigns in peace surpassing sense;
 And bids love's sabbath now commence.

29 JESUS ascends his Father's throne,
 The Godhead love pavilion;
 And after him my heart shall fly,
 CHRIST live in me, and no more I.

30 O let us all resound his praise,
 Our cries and vows incessant raise,
 That he may us the favour deign,
 In this blest throne with him to reign.

F I N I S.

